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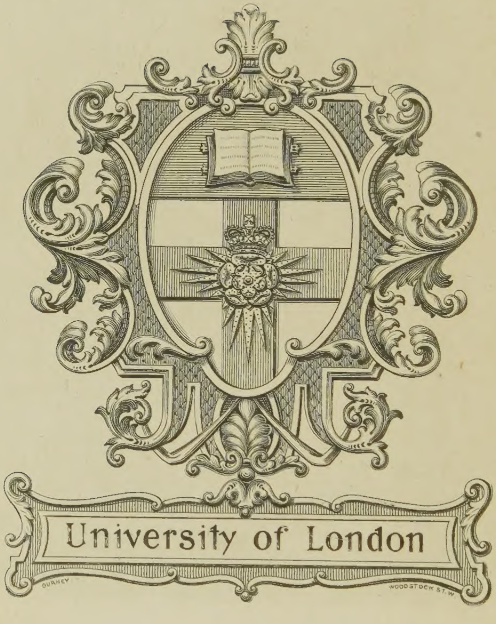

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THE

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(AUTHORISED EDITION),

FOURTH SERIES.

FOURTH SESSION OF THE TWENTY-SEVENTH PARLIAMENT
OF THE
UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND.

3 EDWARD VII.

VOLUME CXXVI.

COMPRISING THE PERIOD FROM THE TWENTY-THIRD DAY OF JULY
TO THE FIFTH DAY OF AUGUST, 1903.

NINTH VOLUME OF SESSION.

1903.

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CHRONOLOGY OF "THE PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES."

THE PARLIAMENTARY HISTORY contains all that can be collected of the Legislative History of this country from the Conquest to the close of the XVIIIth Century (1803), 36 vols. The chief sources whence these Debates are derived are the Constitutional History, 24 vols.; Sir Simonds D'Ewes' Journal; Debates of the Commons in 1620 and 1621; Chandler and Timberland's Debates, 22 vols.; Grey's Debates of the Commons, from 1667 to 1694, 10 vols; Almon's Debates, 24 vols.; Debrett's Debates, 63 vols.; The Hardwicke Papers; Debates in Parliament by Dr. Johnson, &c., &c.

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The Chairman of Committees (*The Earl of Morley*) 6

House in Committee (according to Order.)

Clause 1:

Amendment moved—

"In Clause 1, line 13, after the word 'expenses,' to insert the words, 'so far as they are in the nature of capital expenditure.'"—(*The Earl of Hardwicke.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Clause 1, as amended, agreed to.

Remaining Clause agreed to, and Bill re-committed to the Standing Committee; and to be printed as amended.

THE SUPERANNUATION OF LAW CLERKS.

Lord Monkswell ... ...

Moved, "That there be laid before the House a Return of the total number of law clerks serving in the several divisions of the High Court, giving the number, ages, salaries, and length of service of such clerks as are over the age of 60; and all correspondence passing between the Lord Chancellor and the Treasury with respect to the superannuation of the law clerks serving in the several divisions of the High Court."—(*Lord Monkswell.*)

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The Lord Chief Justice (Lord Alverstone) 12
The Lord Chancellor 14
Lord Monkswell 16

On Question, Motion agreed to.

FISCAL POLICY—THE BIRMINGHAM LEAFLETS.

The Earl of Lytton... 17
The Lord President of the Council (The Duke of Devonshire) 24
Lord James of Hereford 24
Earl Spencer 27
Viscount Cross 29
The Earl of Northbrook 30
The Duke of Devonshire 31
The Earl of Rosebery 36

THE SANITARY CONDITION OF HOLYROOD PALACE.

The Earl of Leven and Melville 42

Moved, "That there be laid before the House report or correspondence relating to any examination that may have been made previous to 1902 of the drainage system, the sanitary condition, and the water-supply of the Palace of Holyrood House; and also a return of the repairs and improvements in Holyrood Palace and its grounds since 1893, with their cost each year."—(*The Earl of Leven and Melville.*)

The First Commissioner of Works (Lord Windsor) 47
The Earl of Leven and Melville 49

Motion, by leave of the House, withdrawn.

Irish Land Bill.—Read 1ª; and to be printed. (No. 170.) 49

London Education Bill.—Read 1ª; to be printed; and to be read 2ª on Tuesday next—(*The Earl Vane, M. Londonderry*). (No. 171.) ... 50

Licensing Acts (Scotland) Consolidation and Amendment Bill.—Read 1ª; to be printed; and to be read 2ª on Thursday next—(*The Lord Balfour*). (No. 175.) 50

House adjourned at half-past Seven o'clock, till to-morrow, Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: THURSDAY, 23RD JULY, 1903.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Bournemouth Corporation Tramways Bill [LORDS]; Sutton Coldfield Corporation Bill [Lords].—To be read the third time to-morrow 50

Manchester Corporation Bill [LORDS].—Reported from the Police and Sanitary Committee, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 50

PRIVATE BILLS (GROUP H).—Sir AUGUSTUS GODSON reported from the Committee on Group H of Private Bills: That, for the convenience of parties, they had adjourned until Tuesday next, at half-past Eleven of the Clock; Report to lie upon the Table 50

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MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.—

That they have agreed to—Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 5) Bill; Great Southern and Western Railway Bill; without Amendment.

Amendments to—Scottish American Mortgage Company, Limited, Bill [Lords]; South Lancashire Tramways Bill [Lords]; Didcot, Newbury, and Southampton Railway Bill [Lords]; without Amendment.

That they have passed a Bill intituled, "An Act to confirm a Provisional Order under the Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, relating to Glasgow Corporation Tramways." [Glasgow Corporation Tramways Order Confirmation Bill [Lords].]

Also, A Bill intituled, "An Act to confirm a Provisional Order under the Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, relating to Perth Corporation (Tramways)." [Perth Corporation (Tramways) Order Confirmation Bill [Lords].]

And, also, a Bill intituled, "An Act to confirm a Provisional Order under The Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, relating to Aberdeen Corporation Tramways." [Aberdeen Corporation Tramways Order Confirmation Bill [Lords].] 50

Glasgow Corporation Tramways Order Confirmation Bill [LORDS].—Read the first time; to be read a second time upon Friday, 31st July, and to be printed. (Bill 294) 51

Perth Corporation (Tramways) Order Confirmation Bill [LORDS].—Read the first time; to be considered upon Monday next 51

Aberdeen Corporation Tramways Order Confirmation Bill [LORDS].—Read the first time; to be considered upon Monday next 51

PETITIONS.

ELECTORAL AREAS (LONDON).—Petition from Shoreditch, for legislation; to lie upon the Table 52

PUBLIC LIBRARIES.—Petition from Clonmel, for alteration of Law; to lie upon the Table 52

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

ORDNANCE SURVEY.—Copy presented, of Report of the Progress of the Ordnance Survey to the 31st March, 1903 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 52

AGRARIAN OUTRAGES (IRELAND).—Copy presented, of Return for the quarter ended 30th June, 1903 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 53

FORESHORES.—Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 21st July, 1903, directing the application of moneys received by the Board of Trade in the year ended 31st March, 1903, in respect of the rights and interests of the Crown in the Foreshores of the United Kingdom [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 53

POLICE ACT, 1890.—Copy presented, of Correspondence relative to the refusal of the Secretary of State's certificate under Section 17 (2) of the Act to the River Tyne Police Force for the year ended 29th September, 1902 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 53

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WEST INDIES.—Copy presented, of Report on Excise Restrictions in force in the West Indies and British Guiana in relation to a proposal to sanction the payment of such an allowance on export of rum as shall compensate the distillers in those colonies for additional outlay caused by Excise Restrictions [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 53

EXPORTS (WOOLLEN AND COTTON GOODS AND CUTLERY)—Return ordered, "of the total amount and total value of our exports to foreign countries of woollen goods, of cotton goods, and of cutlery, respectively, in 1877, 1882, 1887, 1892, 1897, and 1902."—(*Colonel Denny*) 53

LOCAL TAXATION LICENCES, 1902–3.—Return ordered, "of the amount received in respect of each administrative county and county borough in England and Wales for local taxation licence duties and penalties, under the Local Government Act, 1888, in the year ended the 31st day of March, 1903."—(*Mr. Grant Lawson*) 53

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

"HYACINTH" AND "MINERVA"—TIME SPENT ON REPAIRS.—Question, Colonel Denny (Kilmarnock Burghs); Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster 53

HOLYHEAD GUARDSHIP—TRADE WITH LOCAL SHOPKEEPERS.—Question, Mr. Griffith (Anglesey); Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster 53

INCREASED WAGES FOR DOCKYARD TRADES.—Question, Capt. Norton (Newington, W.); Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster 54

FISCAL INQUIRY—ASSISTANCE OF CO-OPERATIVE SOCIETIES.—Question, Mr. Broadhurst (Leicester); Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour... 54

INDIAN CONTRIBUTION TO MILITARY EXPENDITURE.—Question, Sir Mancherjee Bhownaggree (Bethnal Green, N.E.); Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 55

LAND REVENUE DEFAULTERS IN INDIA—ISSUE OF WRITS.—Question, Mr. Weir (Ross and Cromarty); Answer, Lord George Hamilton 55

IRRIGATION OF NATTORE DISTRICT, NORTHERN BENGAL.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Lord George Hamilton 55

KALKA-SIMLA RAILWAY—DATE OF OPENING.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Lord George Hamilton 56

REPATRIATION OF COOLIES.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Lord George Hamilton 56

INDIAN BUDGET—ANNUAL STATEMENT OF PROGRESS.—Question, Mr. Herbert Roberts (Denbighshire, W.); Answer, Lord George Hamilton 56

PRICE OF, AND DUTY ON, WHEAT IN ENGLAND, FRANCE, AND GERMANY.—Question, Colonel Long (Worcestershire, Evesham); Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour 57

PAY OF OFFICE STAFF OF IRISH LIGHTS BOARDS.—Question, Colonel McCalmont, (Antrim, E.); Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour 57

IDENTIFICATION OF UNITED STATES EXPORTS SENT *via* CANADA.—Question, Mr. D. A. Thomas (Merthyr Tydvil); Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour 58

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EXPENDITURE OF SCOTCH FISHERIES GRANT.—Question, Mr. John Dewar (Inverness-shire); Answer, Mr. A. Graham Murray 58

POLLUTION OF RIVER GIRVAN.—Question, Mr. Eugene Wason (Clackmannan and Kinross); Answer, Mr. A. Graham Murray 59

FISHING RIGHTS IN ORKNEY.—Question, Mr. Cathcart Wason (Orkney and Shetland); Answer, Mr. Elliot 59

WIRELESS TELEGRAPHY IN THE NAVY.—Question, Sir Thomas Dewar (Tower Hamlets, St. George's); Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster 60

SHIPBUILDING PROGRAMME.—Questions, Mr. Yerburgh (Chester); Answers, Mr. Arnold-Forster 60

RUSSIAN SHIPBUILDING PROGRAMME.—Question, Mr. Yerburgh; Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster 61

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PERSONS IN RECEIPT OF PAROCHIAL RELIEF.—Question, Mr. Mansfield (Lincolnshire, Spalding); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 62

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ANGLO-PERSIAN CONVENTION.—Question, Mr. Moon (St. Pancras, N.); Answer, Lord Cranborne 63

SICKNESS AMONG IMPORTED NATIVES AT JOHANNESBURG.—Question, Sir Brampton Gurdon (Norfolk, N.); Answer, Lord Cranborne 64

LAND BILL—CLAUSE 92—LOCAL GOVERNMENT INSPECTORS.—Question, Mr. O'Shee (Waterford, W.); Answer, Mr. Atkinson 64

IRISH EDUCATION INQUIRY.—Question, Mr. Dillon (Mayo, E.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 64

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RECOGNITION OF DISTINGUISHED SERVICE DURING SOUTH AFRICAN WAR—SUPPLEMENTARY LIST OF OFFICERS.—Question, Sir John Gorst (Cambridge University); Answer, Mr. Brodrick 66

38TH SOUTH STAFFORDSHIRE REGIMENT—HOME SERVICE AND BARRACK ACCOMMODATION.—Question, Mr. Norman (Wolverhampton, S.); Answer, Mr. Brodrick 66

VOLUNTEERS IN THE CIVIL SERVICE—PERMISSION TO ATTEND CAMP.—Question, Sir Thomas Dewar; Answer, Mr. Brodrick 66

CIVIL SURGEONS AND ARMY APPOINTMENTS.—Question, Mr. Soames (Norfolk, S.); Answer, Mr. Brodrick 67

BRIGADE OF GUARDS—DEFICIENT STRENGTH.—Question, Mr. Kenneth Balfour (Christchurch); Answer, Mr. Brodrick 67

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WEIGHTS CARRIED BY CAVALRY HORSES.—Question, Colonel Legge (St. George's, Hanover Square); Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Brodrick, Surrey, Guildford) 68

SOMALILAND.—Questions, Mr. Dillon (Mayo, E.), and Sir Wilfrid Lawson (Cornwall, Camborne); Answers, Mr. Brodrick 69

NATIVE LABOUR IN SOUTH AFRICA.—Questions, Mr. Sydney Buxton (Tower Hamlets, Poplar), and Sir Charles Dilke (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean); Answers, The Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. J. Chamberlain, Birmingham, W.) 70

HONG-KONG—CALF LYMPH SUPPLIES.—Question, Mr. Weir (Ross and Cromarty); Answer, Mr. J. Chamberlain 70

SANITARY CONDITION OF HONG-KONG.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Mr. J. Chamberlain 71

GOVERNMENT BACTERIOLOGIST AT HONG-KONG.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Mr. J. Chamberlain 71

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INDIA AND THE SOUTH AFRICAN GARRISON.—Question, Sir Henry Fowler (Wolverhampton, E.); Answer, Lord George Hamilton 72

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Trade Organisations and the Inquiry.—Question, Sir Charles McLaren (Leicestershire, Bosworth); Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour 77

Lascars on British Vessels.—Question, Sir Mancherjee Bhownaggree (Bethnal Green, N.E.); Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour 78

Destruction of Fish at Billingsgate.—Question, Mr. Doughty (Great Grimsby); Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour 78

Non-provided School Managers.—Question, Mr. Mansfield (Lincolnshire, Spalding); Answer, The Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Education (Sir William Anson, Oxford University) 79

Building in the Island of Lewis.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, The Lord Advocate (Mr. A. Graham Murray, Buteshire) 80

Congestion in the Highlands.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Mr. A. Graham Murray 80

Bee-Keeping in Ireland.—Question, Mr. Boland (Kerry, S.); Answer, Mr. Atkinson 80

Police and Public at Ardrahan.—Questions, Mr. Duffy, (Galway, S.); Answers, Mr. Atkinson 81

Labourers' Cottages in the Listowel Union.—Question, Mr. Flavin (Kerry, N.); Answer, Mr. Atkinson 82

Fiscal Inquiry—Taxation on Food.—Questions, Mr. Winston Churchill (Oldham); Answers, The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.) 82

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Industrial Methods.—Question, Mr. Herbert Samuel; Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 84

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Artillery Volunteer Armaments.—Question Mr. Seymour Ormsby-Gore (Lincolnshire, Gainsborough); Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 85

Imperial Defence.—Question, Mr. Cathcart Wason (Orkney and Shetland); Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 85

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THE DEATH OF THE POPE.—Questions, Mr. Wm. Redmond (Clare, E.), Mr. Malcolm (Suffolk, Stowmarket) and Mr. Sloan (Belfast, S.); Answers, Mr. Victor Cavendish (Derbyshire, W.) and Mr. A. J. Balfour 85

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.—Questions, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman (Stirling Burghs) and Mr. Lough (Islington, W.); Answers, Mr. A. J. Balfour ... 87

MUNICIPAL TRADING.—Report, with Minutes of Evidence, from the Joint Committee, brought up and read. Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 270.] 88

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).—Mr. Halsey reported from the Committee of Selection: That they had discharged the following Members from the Standing Committee on Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures; Mr. Lonsdale, Mr. O'Malley, Mr. Kilbride, Mr. Flavin, and Mr. O'Mara; and had appointed in substitution: Sir Charles Cayzer, Mr. Young, Mr. J. P. Farrell, Mr. William M'Killop, and Mr. Boland 89

Mr. HALSEY further reported from the Committee of Selection: That they had discharged the following Member from the Standing Committee on Law and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure: Mr. Munro Ferguson; and had appointed in substitution: Mr. Haldane. Reports to lie upon the Table 89

PUBLIC PETITIONS COMMITTEE.—Seventh Report brought up, and read; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 89

Merchant Shipping Act (1894) Amendment Bill.—"To amend the Merchant Shipping Act, 1894, with respect to Passenger and Emigrant Ships, and with respect to safety," presented by Mr. Runciman; supported by Sir Charles Cayzer, Sir Robert Ropner, Mr. Rea, and Colonel Denny; to be read a second time upon Monday, 3rd August, and to be printed. [Bill 295.] 89

Sale of Butter Bill.—Reported, with an Amended Title, from the standing Committee on Trade, &c.

Report to lie upon the Table and to be printed. [No. 269.] Minutes of the Proceedings of the Standing Committee to be printed. [No. 269]. Bill, as amended (in the Standing Committee), to be taken into consideration upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 293] 89

THE HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES.

The President of the Local Government Board (*Mr. Walter Long, Bristol, S.*)... 89

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That leave be given to bring in a Bill to amend the Law relating to the Housing of the Working Classes."—(*Mr. Walter Long.*)

Question agreed to. Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Walter Long, Mr. Attorney-General, and Mr. Grant Lawson.

Housing of the Working Classes (No. 2) Bill.—"To amend the Law relating to the Housing of the Working Classes," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Tuesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 296.]

SUPPLY [19TH ALLOTTED DAY.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith) in the chair.

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS ESTIMATES, 1903-4.—CLASS II.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £34,887, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March, 1904, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Department of His Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs."

Sir Charles Dilke (*Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean*) 92

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item A (Salaries, Wages, and Allowances) be reduced by £100, in respect of the Salary of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs."—(*Sir Charles Dilke.*)

Mr. Gibson Bowles (*Lynn Regis*) 102
The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (*Lord Cranborne, Rochester*) 111
Mr. Blake (*Longford, S*). 123
Sir Edward Grey (*Northumberland, Berwick*) 124
The Secretary of State for the Colonies (*Mr. J. Chamberlain, Birmingham, W.*) 134
Mr. Asquith (*Fifeshire, E.*) 138
The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (*Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.*) 145
Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman (*Stirling Burghs*) 149
Mr. John Redmond (*Waterford*) 152
Lord Cranborne 159
Mr. Norman (*Wolverhampton, S.*) 162
Lord Edmund Talbot (*Sussex, Chichester*) 167
Mr. Joseph Walton (*Yorkshire, W.R., Barnsley*) 167

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Committee report Progress; to sit again this evening.

EVENING SITTING.

SUPPLY [19TH ALLOTTED DAY].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith), in the Chair.]

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS ESTIMATES, 1903-4.—CLASS II.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £34,887, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1904, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Department of His Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs."

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Whereupon Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item A (Salaries, Wages and Allowances) be reduced by £100, in respect of the Salary of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs."—(*Sir Charles Dilke.*)

Mr. Joseph Walton 170
Mr. Moon (*St. Pancras, N*). 180
Mr. Bryce (*Aberdeen, S.*) 182
Lord Cranborne 185
Mr. Lloyd-George (*Carnarvon Boroughs*) 191
Mr. Reginald Lucas (*Portsmouth*) 195
Mr. Emmott (*Oldham*) 195
Col. Nolan (*Galway, N.*) 198
Mr. William Redmond (*Clare, E.*) 198
Mr. Brigg (*Yorkshire, W.R., Keighley*) 199
Mr. Labouchere (*Northampton*) 199
Lord Cranborne 200
Sir Edward Grey 203

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

And it being Midnight, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon Monday next.

PATENT OFFICE EXTENSION [EXPENSES].—Resolution reported —"That it is expedient to authorise the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of all expenses incurred by the Commissioners of Works under any Act of the present Session for the acquisition of land for the further extension of the Patent Office, and for purposes connected therewith."

Resolution agreed to 204

Adjourned at five minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS: FRIDAY, 24TH JULY, 1903.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 5) Bill.—The Chairman of Committees informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn: The Order made on Friday last discharged, and Bill committed to a Committee of the whole House 205

Strabane and Letterkenny Railway Bill.—Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Lord Braye be proposed to the House as a member of the Select Committee on the said Bill in the place of the Lord Lawrence. Read, and agreed to 205

North Metropolitan Electric Power Supply Bill [H.L.].—Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Five Lords appointed a Committee on the Strabane and Letterkenny Railway Bill do form the Select Committee for the consideration of the North Metropolitan Electric Power Supply Bill. Read, and agreed to; all Petitions referred to the Committee, with leave to the petitioners praying to be heard by counsel against the Bill to be heard as desired, as also counsel for the Bill 205

North Metropolitan Electric Power Supply Bill [H.L.].—Report from the Committee of Selection, That Lord Sherborne be proposed to the House as a member of the Select Committee on the said Bill in the place of the Lord Kinnaird. Read and agreed to 205

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Alexandra Park and Palace Bill.—Reported, without Amendment... ... 205

Hastings Harbour Bill [H.L.].—The King's consent signified; and Bill reported, with Amendments 205

Neath, Pontardawe, and Brynaman Railway Bill.—Read 3ª, with the Amendments; further Amendments made; Bill passed, and returned to the Commons 205

Mullingar, Kells, and Drogheda Railway Bill; Great Western Railway Bill; Lancashire and Yorkshire and London and North-Western Railways (Steam Vessels) Bill. Read 3ª, with the Amendments, and passed, and returned to the Commons 206

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

TRADE REPORTS: ANNUAL SERIES.
No. 3038. Russia (Poland and Lithuania).
No. 3039. Mexico (Vera Cruz).
No. 3040. Norway.
No. 3041. Sweden. (Gothenburg) 206

BRITISH SOUTH AFRICA COMPANY.—Estimates for 1902–1903 and 1903–1904 (in continuation of [Cd. 1363], November, 1902). 206

MERCHANT SHIPPING (LOSS OF LIFE).—Return showing the lives lost by wreck, drowning, or other accident in British merchant ships registered in the United Kingdom during the years 1891 to 1892 inclusive (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper [Cd. 1253.]).
Presented (by Command) and ordered to lie on the Table 206

FISCAL POLICY.

Lord Avebury 206
The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (*The Marquess of Lansdowne*) 208
The Earl of Portsmouth 209
The Lord President of the Council (*The Duke of Devonshire*) 209

Light Railways Bill.—[SECOND READING].—Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

Load Wolverton 210

Moved, That the Bill be now read 2ª.—(*Lord Wolverton.*)

The Chairman of Committees (*The Earl of Morley*) 211

On Question, Bill read 2ª and committed to a Committee of the whole House on Monday next.

Motor-Cars Bill [H.L.]—Amendments reported (according to Order).

The Earl of Camperdown 212
Lord Tweedmouth 213
The Secretary for Scotland (*Lord Balfour of Burleigh*) 213
Lord Burghclere 213

Amendment moved—

"In Clause 1, page 1, line 7, to leave out the words 'or negligently' and to insert the words 'or without due care.'"—(*Lord Burghclere.*)

Lord Balfour of Burleigh 213
The Earl of Portsmouth 214

Amendment, by leave of the House, withdrawn.

Lord Braye 214

Amendment moved—

"In Clause 1, page 1, line 11, after the word 'roadway' to insert the words 'or shall, when about to cross a spot where two or more streets or thoroughfares meet, fail to sound the motor horn if driving a car propelled by steam or by petrol, or fail to ring the bell if driving a car propelled by electricity.'"—(*Lord Braye.*)

Lord Balfour of Burleigh 214

Amendment, by leave of the House, withdrawn.

Lord Balfour of Burleigh 215

Amendment moved—

"In page 3, after Clause 3, to insert as a new Clause, 'If any person forges or fraudulently alters or uses, or fraudulently lends or allows to be used by any other person, any mark for identifying a car or any licence under this Act he shall be guilty of an offence under this Act.'"—(*Lord Balfour of Burleigh.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Earl Russell 215

Amendments moved—

"In Clause 4, page 3, line 28, to leave out the words 'motor-car' and to insert the word 'vehicle'; in line 30, to leave out the words 'motor-car' and to insert the word 'vehicle; and in line 32, to leave out the word 'car,' and to insert the word 'vehicle.'"—(*Earl Russell.*)

Lord Balfour of Burleigh 216

Amendment, by leave of the House, withdrawn.

The Earl of Camperdown 216

Amendment moved—

"In Clause 4, lines 33 and 34, to leave out the words 'liable for each offence, on summary conviction, to a fine not exceeding ten pounds,' and to insert the words 'guilty of an offence under this Act.'"—(*The Earl of Camperdown.*)

Lord Balfour of Burleigh 216
The Earl of Portsmouth 217
Lord Tweedmouth 217
Earl Russell 217

On Question, Amendment negatived.

The Earl of Camperdown 218
Lord Balfour of Burleigh 218
The Earl of Wemyss 219

Amendment moved—

"In Clause 6, page 4, line 21, after the word 'hour' to insert the words 'or such more moderate speed as circumstances and public safety require.'"—(*The Earl of Wemyss.*)

Lord Balfour of Burleigh 219

Amendment, by leave of the House, withdrawn.

Lord Balfour of Burleigh 220

Amendment moved—

"In page 4, after Clause 6, to insert as a new Clause, 'The Councils of Counties and County Boroughs shall within their areas cause to be set up sign posts denoting dangerous corners, cross-roads, and precipitous places, where such sign posts appear to them to be necessary.'"—(*Lord Balfour of Burleigh.*)

The Chairman of Committees (*The Earl of Morley*) 220
Lord Balfour of Burleigh 220
Earl Spencer 221

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Lord Balfour of Burleigh 221

Amendment moved—

"In Clause 8, page 4, at the end of Clause, to insert, as a new Subsection: 'The power of the Local Government Board to make regulations under Section 6 of the Locomotives on Highways Act, 1896, shall, as respects motor-cars exceeding two tons in weight unladen, include a power to make regulations as to speed.'"—(*Lord Balfour of Burleigh.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Lord Braye... 221
Lord Balfour of Burleigh 221
The Earl of Wemyss 222
Earl Spencer 222

Bill to be read 3ª on Tuesday next, and to be printed as amended.

House adjourned at Six o'clock to Monday next at a quarter before Eleven o'clock

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HOUSE OF COMMONS: FRIDAY, 24TH JULY, 1903.

The House met at Twelve of the clock.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY COMPLIED WITH).—MR. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, viz.:—Scottish Central Electric Power Bill [Lords].

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City and South London Railway Bill; Newcastle-upon-Tyne Electric Supply Bill; Romford and District Tramways Bill; Wigan Corporation Tramways Bill; Woolwich Borough Council Bill.—Lords' Amendments considered, and agreed to 223

Taff Vale Railway Bill [LORDS].—Read a third time, and passed, without Amendment 223

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Barry Railway Bill [LORDS]; Birmingham District Tramways Bill [Lords]; Dewsbury, Batley, and Birstal Tramways Bill [Lords]; Manchester Southern Tramways Bill [Lords]; Maryport Harbour Bill [Lords].—As amended, considered; to be read the third time 223

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Worthing Corporation Tramways Bill [LORDS].—As amended, considered; Amendments made; Bill to be read the third time 223

Bournemouth Corporation Tramways Bill [LORDS] (by Order); Sutton Coldfield Corporation Bill [Lords] (by Order).—Read the third time, and passed, with Amendments 223

Rothesay Corporation Order Confirmation Bill.—Considered; to be read the third time upon Monday next 224

Scottish Ontario and Manitoba Land Company Bill [LORDS].—Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table 224

Bournemouth Gas and Water Bill [LORDS].—Reported, with an Amendment; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 224

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Watford and Edgware Railway Bill; London County Council (General Powers) Bill; London United Tramways Bill; London, Tilbury, and Southend Railway Bill; Great Northern, Piccadilly, and Brompton Railway (Various Powers) Bill; Harrow Road and Paddington Tramways Bill, with Amendments.

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Scottish Episcopal Clergy Widows' and Orphans' Fund Order Confirmation Bill.—Considered; to be read the third time upon Monday next ... 225

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LICENSING LAW (COMPENSATION FOR NON-RENEWAL) BILL.—Petition against, from Wenlock; and London; to lie upon the Table 225

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SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.—Petition from Bradford, in favour; to lie upon the Table 225

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BRITISH SOUTH AFRICA COMPANY.—Copy presented, of Estimates of the British South Africa Company for 1902–3 and 1903–4 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 225

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).—Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3038 to 3041 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 225

MERCHANT SHIPPING (LOSS OF LIFE).—Copy presented of Return showing the lives lost by wreck, drowning, or other accidents in British merchant ships registered in the United Kingdom, during the years 1891 to 1902, inclusive (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper [C. 1253]) (by Command); to lie upon the Table 225

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Military Works Bill.—[SECOND READING.]—Order for Second Reading read.

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Mr. Lough (Islington, W.)... 242

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"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day three months.'"—(*Mr. Buchanan.*)

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Question put.

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Main Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed for Monday next.

Poor Prisoners' Defence (Re-Committed) Bill.—Considered in Committee, and reported, without Amendment; to be read the third time upon Monday next 295

Adjourned at a quarter before Six o'clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS: MONDAY, 27TH JULY, 1903.

FAUCONBERG, DARCY (DE KNAYTH), AND MEINILL BARONIES.—Report made from the Committee of Privileges—

Read, and agreed to; and resolved and adjudged accordingly; and Resolution and Judgment to be laid before His Majesty by the Lords with White Staves 297

POULETT PEERAGE.—Report made from the Committee of Privileges –

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POULETT PEERAGE.—Ordered that all deeds, documents, and papers produced on behalf of the claimants by their respective agents be delivered to the said agents, and that the evidence be printed. [No. 177] 299

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Western Valleys (Monmouthshire) Sewage Board Bill.—Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments 299

Stroud and Districts Tramways Bill.—Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments 299

Bath Corporation Water Bill.—Read 3ª, with the Amendments, and passed, and returned to the Commons 299

East Ham Improvement Bill.—Read 3ª, with the Amendments, further Amendments made; Bill passed, and returned to the Commons 299

Dublin, Wicklow, and Wexford Railway Bill.—Read 3ª, with the Amendments, and passed, and returned to the Commons 299

Taff Vale Railway Bill [H.L.]—Returned from the Commons agreed to ... 299

Bournemouth Corporation Tramways Bill [H.L.]—Returned from the Commons agreed to, with Amendments 299

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City and South London Railway Bill, Newcastle-upon-Tyne Electric Supply Bill, Romford and District Tramways Bill, Wigan Corporation Tramways Bill, Woolwich Borough Council Bill.—Returned from the Commons with the Amendments agreed to 299

Carmarthenshire Electric Power Bill [H.L.]—Commons' Amendments considered; one disagreed to; the rest agreed to: A Committee appointed to prepare a reason to be offered to the Commons for the Lords disagreeing to the said Amendment; The Committee to meet forthwith: Report from the Committee of the reason prepared by them; read, and agreed to; and a message sent to the Commons to return the said Bill, with a reason 300

Fife Electric Power Bill [H.L.]—Commons' Amendments considered; one disagreed to; the rest agreed to: A Committee appointed to prepare a reason to be offered to the Commons for the Lords disagreeing to the said Amendment; The Committee to meet forthwith: Report from the Committee of the reason prepared by them; read, and agreed to; and a message sent to the Commons to return the said Bill, with a reason ... 300

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COLONIES (ANNUAL).—No. 391, Gambia; Report for 1902 301

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ROYAL BOTANIC GARDENS, KEW.—Rules for the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, in connection with the regulations prescribed by the Parks Regulation Act, 1872 301

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Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table 301

Post Office Sites Bill.—Brought from the Commons and read 1ª; to be printed; and referred to the Examiners. (No. 178.) 301

Light Railways Bill [H.L.].—House in Committee (according to Order): Bill reported without Amendment, and recommitted to the Standing Committee.

House adjourned at Twenty-five minutes before Five o'clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: MONDAY, 27TH JULY.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Birmingham Corporation Bill [LORDS].—Chatham and District Light Railways Bill [Lords]; Exeter Corporation Bill [Lords]; Willesden Urban District Council Bill [Lords].—Read the third time, and passed, with Amendments 302

Chard Corporation Gas and Electricity Bill [LORDS].—Gosport and Fareham Tramways Bill [Lords]; Hove, Worthing, and District Tramways Bill [Lords]; Rochester Corporation Tramways and Improvements Bill [Lords]; South Eastern and London, Chatham, and Dover Railways Bill [Lords].—As amended, considered; to be read the third time 302

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Wick and Pulteney Harbours Order Confirmation.—Bill to confirm a Provisional Order under The Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, relating to Wick and Pulteney Harbours, ordered to be brought in by The Lord Advocate and Mr. Solicitor-General for Scotland 302

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County Courts (Plaints and Sittings). –Return presented, relative thereto [Address 10th July ; *Mr. Cochrane*] ; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed [No. 271.] 303

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Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew.—Copy presented, of rules for the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, in connection with the regulations prescribed by the Parks Regulation Act, 1872 [by Act] ; to lie upon the Table 304

Public Income and Expenditure.—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 17th June ; *Sir Henry Fowler*] ; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 272.] 304

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Naval Works Bill.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. J. W. Lowther (Cumberland, Penrith) in the Chair.]

Question proposed, "That the Clause stand part of the Bill."

Mr. Buchanan (Perthshire, E.) 392

Amendment proposed—

"In page 1, line 15, to leave out from the word 'Act' to end of line 19."—(*Mr. Buchanan*).

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the clause."

The Civil Lord of the Admiralty (Mr. Pretyman, Suffolk, Woodbridge) ... 393
Mr. Edmund Robertson (Dundee) 393

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 173; Noes, 67. (Division List No. 189.)

Clause 1 agreed to.

Clause 2 agreed to.

Mr. Buchanan 397

Amendment proposed—

"In page 2, to leave out lines 20 and 21."—(*Mr. Buchanan.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the schedule."

Sir John Colomb (Great Yarmouth) 397
Mr. Pretyman 398
Sir James Joicey (Durham, Chester-le-Street) 398

Question put and agreed to.

Mr. Gibson Bowles (Lynn Regis) 399

Amendment proposed—

"In page 2, to leave out line 24."—(*Mr. Gibson Bowles.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the schedule."

Mr. Pretyman 400
Mr. Gibson Bowles... 401

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Mr. Buchanan 402

Amendment proposed—

"In page 2, to leave out line 35."—(*Mr. Buchanan.*)

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Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the schedule."

Mr. Pretyman 403
Mr. Whitley (Halifax) 404

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 167; Noes, 62. (Division List No. 190.)

Mr. Buchanan 405

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Committee report Progress; to sit again this evening.

EVENING SITTING.

Naval Works Bill.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. J. W. Lowther (Cumberland, Penrith) in the Chair.]

Schedule:—

Mr. Buchanan 407

Amendment proposed—

"In page 2, to leave out line 36."—(*Mr. Buchanan.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Schedule."

Mr. Pretyman 408
Mr. Edmund Robertson 408
Mr. Whitley 409
Sir John Colomb 410
Mr. Buchanan 410
Mr. Dalziel (Kirkcaldy Burghs) 410
The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Ritchie, Croydon)... 411
Mr. Broadhurst (Leicester)... 411
Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman (Stirling Burghs) 413
Mr. Ritchie 413
Sir Fortescue Flannery (Yorkshire, Shipley) 414
Mr. Edmund Robertson 414
Mr. Pretyman 415
Sir James Joicey 416
Mr. Kearley (Devonport) 416
Mr. Dalziel... 417
Mr. Broadhurst 418

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 136; Noes, 60. (Divison List No. 191.)

Mr. Thomas Shaw (Hawick Burghs) 421

Amendment proposed—

"In page 3, line 15, column 5, to leave out, '£200,000,' and insert '£130,000.'"—(*Mr. Thomas Shaw.*)

Question proposed, "That £200,000 stand part of the schedule."

The Lord Advocate (*Mr. Abraham Murray, Buteshire* 424
Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman 426
Sir Fortescue Flannery 428
Mr. Edmund Robertson 428
Mr. John Dewar (*Inverness-shire*) 430
Sir William Tomlinson (*Preston*) 431
Mr. Pretyman 432
Mr. Thomas Shaw 432

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 144 ; Noes, 55. (Division List No. 192.)

Mr. Buchanan 433

Amendment proposed—

"In page 3, to leave out line 18."—(*Mr. Buchanan.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the schedule."

Mr. Pretyman 435

Question put, and agreed to.

Sir John Colomb 435

Amendment proposed—

"In page 3, line 19, to leave out '£791,400,' and insert '£670,400.'"—(*Sir John Colomb.*)

Question proposed, "That £791,400 stand part of the schedule."

Mr. Pretyman 435
Mr. Courtenay Warner (*Staffordshire, Lichfield*) 435
Mr. Whitley 436

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

And, it being midnight, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Committee report Progress ; to sit again to-morrow.

Poor Law (Dissolution of School Districts and Adjustments) Bill.—Read a second time, and committed for this day 436

Jury Acts (Ireland) Amendment Bill.—Order for Second Reading read, and discharged 436

Bill withdrawn.

PUBLIC BUILDINGS EXPENSES (CONSOLIDATED FUNDS).—

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House will, this day, resolve itself into a Committee to consider of making further provision for defraying the expenses of the purchase of Land and Buildings and the construction of Buildings and Works in connection with certain Public Departments, and of authorising the payment out of the Consolidated Fund and out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of such sums as may be necessary for those purposes (King's Recommendation signified).—(*Mr. Elliot.*)

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Debate arising.

And, it being after Midnight, and objection being taken to further proceeding, the Debate stood adjourned 436

Debate to be resumed this day.

Adjourned at fifteen minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS, TUESDAY, 28TH JULY, 1903.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Bournemouth Corporation Tramways Bill [H.L.].—Commons' Amendments considered, and agreed to 437

Great Central Railway Bill.—Reported, with Amendments 437

Gateshead Corporation Bill.—Erith Tramways and Improvement Bill ; Kingston-upon-Hull Corporation Bill ; Coventry Electric Tramways Bill ; South Yorkshire Joint Railways Bill ; Dover Corporation Bill ; Sheffield Corporation Bill.—Reported, with Amendments 437

Public Offices (Dublin) Bill.—Reported, without Amendment, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Thursday next 437

Castleblaney, Keady, and Armagh Railway (Extension of Time) Bill.—Reported, without Amendment 437

North Eastern Railway Bill ; Cork Harbour Bill.—The King's consent signified ; and Bills reported, with Amendments 437

Ulster and Connaught Light Railways Bill.—Reported, with an Amendment 437

Alexandra Park and Palace Bill.—Read 3ª, and passed 437

Hastings Harbour Bill [H.L.].—Read 3ª, and passed, and sent to the Commons 437

Baker Street and Waterloo Railway (Extension of Time) Bill.—Read 3ª, with the Amendments, and passed, and returned to the Commons... ... 437

Rothesay Corporation Order Confirmation Bill ; Scottish Episcopal Clergy Widows' and Orphans' Fund Order Confirmation Bill.—Brought from the Commons. 437

Birmingham Corporation Bill [H.L.] ; Exeter Corporation Bill [H.L.]—Returned from the Commons agreed to, with Amendments 437

Chatham and District Light Railways Bill [H.L.] ; Willesden Urban District Council Bill [H.L.].—Returned from the Commons agreed to, with Amendments. The said Amendments considered, and agreed to 438

Rothesay Corporation Order Confirmation Bill (No. 180) ; Scottish Episcopal Clergy Widows' and Orphans' Fund Order Confirmation Bill, (No. 181).—Read 1ª ; to be printed, and (pursuant to the Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899) deemed to have been read 2ª (The Lord Balfour) ; and reported from the Committee... 438

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Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 8) Bill.—House in Committee (according to order): Bill reported without Amendment: Standing Committee negatived; and Bill to be read 3ª on Thursday next 438

Gas Orders Confirmation (No. 2) Bill [H.L.].—Commons' Amendments considered (according to Order), and agreed to 438

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

TRADE REPORTS. Annual Series—No. 3047. France (Marseilles); No. 3048. China (Chung-king) 438

LOCAL TAXATION (IRELAND).—Returns for the year 1901-2 438

SOUTH AFRICA.—Correspondence relating to a proposal to employ Indian coolies under indenture on the railways in the Transvaal and the Orange River Colony.

Presented [by Command] and ordered to lie on the Table 438

Borough Funds Bill.—Returned from the Commons, with the Amendment agreed to 438

Local Government (Transfer of Powers) Bill.—Returned from the Commons, with the Amendments agreed to 438

Military Lands Bill.—Reported from the Standing Committee without further Amendment: The Report of the Amendment made in Committee of the Whole House to be received on Thursday next 439

Light Railways Bill [H.L.].—Reported from the Standing Committee without Amendment, and to be read 3ª on Thursday next 439

Bills of Exchange Act, 1882, Amendment Bill [H.L.].—A Bill to amend the Bills of Exchange Act, 1882, was presented by the Lord Chancellor; read 1ª; and to be printed. (No. 179) 439

London Education Bill—[SECOND READING]—Order of the day for the Second Reading read.

The President of the Board of Education (*The Marquess of Londonderry*)... 439

Moved, That the Bill be now read 2ª.—(*The Marquess of Londonderry.*)

Lord Reay 448

Amendment moved—

"To leave out the word 'now' and add at the end of the Motion the words, 'this day three months.'"—(*Lord Reay.*)

The Lord Archbishop of Canterbury 456
Lord Tweedmouth 469
The Lord Bishop of London 477
Lord Sandhurst 480
The Lord Bishop of Hereford 483
The Earl of Donoughmore... 488
Lord Kinnaird 494
The Lord Bishop of Rochester 498
Lord Coleridge 505
Earl Spencer 509
The Lord President of the Council (*The Duke of Devonshire*) 517

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On Question, whether the word "Now" stand part of the Motion,

Their Lordships divided:—Contents, 69; Not-Contents, 26.

Bill read 2ª accordingly, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Thursday next.

Metropolitan Streets Bill.—House in Committee (according to order). Bill reported without Amendment; Standing Committee negatived; and Bill to be read 3ª on Thursday next 525

Motor-Cars Bill [H.L.]—Read 3ª (according to Order). Drafting Amendment agreed to.

The Earl of Rosslyn 525
The Secretary for Scotland (*Lord Balfour of Burleigh*) 525
The Earl of Northbrook 525

Amendment moved—

"After Clause 13 to insert as a new clause, 'A person shall not be exempt from any of the provisions of this Act by reason only of his being in the public service of the Crown.'"—(*The Earl of Northbrook.*)

Lord Balfour of Burleigh 526

Amendment agreed to.

Moved, That the Bill do now pass.

The Earl of Rosslyn 526
Lord Balfour of Burleigh 527

Bill passed and sent to the Commons.

House adjourned at five minutes before Twelve o'clock, to Thursday next, at quarter past Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: TUESDAY, 28TH JULY, 1903.

The House met at Two of the clock.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Great Northern, Piccadilly and Brompton Railway (Various Powers) Bill.

Mr. Disraeli (*Cheshire, Altrincham*) 527
Mr. Caldwell (*Lanarkshire, Mid*). 528

Lords' Amendments agreed to.

London, Tilbury and Southend Railway Bill.

Mr. Disraeli 528

Lords' Amendments agreed to.

North Western Electricity and Power Gas Bill [LORDS].—Reported, with Amendments.

Report to lie upon the Table and to be printed. 528

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London County Council (General Powers) Bill; Watford and Edgware Railway Bill.—Lords' Amendments considered and agreed to 529

Barry Railway Bill [Lords].—Read the third time, and passed, with Amendments 529

Dewsbury, Batley and Birstal Tramways Bill [Lords].—Manchester Southern Tramways Bill [Lords].—Read the third time, and passed, with Amendments 529

Pentillie Estate Bill [Lords].—Read the third time, and passed, without Amendment 529

Worthing Corporation Tramways Bill [Lords].—Read the third time, and passed, with Amendments 529

Bristol Corporation Bill [Lords]; West Bromwich Corporation Bill [Lords]. —As amended, considered; to be read the third time 529

Lanarkshire Tramways Order Confirmation Bill [Lords].—Read a second time; to be considered to-morrow 529

Tramways Orders Confirmation (No. 1) Bill [Lords].—Reported, with Amendments [Provisional Orders confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printhd 529

Bill, as amended, to be considered to-morrow.

Tramways Orders Confirmation (No. 2) Bill [Lords].—Reported, with Amendments [Provisional Orders confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 529

Bill as amended to be considered to-morrow.

Salford Corporation Bill [Lords].—South Staffordshire Tramways Bill [Lords]; Hastings Harbour District Railway Bill [Lords]; Liverpool University Bill [Lords].—Reported, with Amendments; Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 529

Kip's Patents Bill [Lords].—Reported, without Amendment; Report to lie upon the Table 529

Bill to be read the third time.

Bangor Corporation Bill [Lords]; Shropshire and Worcestershire Electric Power Bill [Lords].—Reported, with Amendments. Reports to lie upon the Table and to be printed 529

Brighton Corporation Bill [Lords].—Reported, with Amendments, from the Police and Sanitary Committee. Report to lie upon the table and to be printed 529

Message from the Lords.

That they have agreed to Bath Corporation Water Bill; East Ham Improvement Bill; Dublin, Wicklow and Wexford Railway Bill, without Amendments.

Amendments to Sutton Coldfield Corporation Bill [Lords], without Amendment.

That they disagree to one of the Amendments to each of the following Bills, viz.:—Carmarthenshire Electric Power Bill [Lords]; Fife Electric Power Bill [Lords], for which disagreements they assign their reasons, and agree to the rest of the Amendments to the said Bills without Amendment.

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That they have passed a Bill intituled, "An Act to define the ranking and priority of the mortgages of the Hastings Harbour Commissioners already issued and to be issued under former Acts for the completion of the harbour works; to extend the periods limited for the purchase of lands for the completion of such works, and for other purposes." (Hastings Harbour Bill [Lords] 530

Hastings Harbour Bill [Lords].—Read the first time, and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills 530

PETITION.

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday Bill.—Petition from Farringdon, in favour; to lie upon the Table 530

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

South Africa (Indian Coolies).—Copy presented, of correspondence relating to a proposal to employ Indian Coolies under indenture on Railways in the Transvaal and Orange River Colony [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 530

Churches (City of London).—Return presented, relative thereto [Address 23rd February; *Mr. Talbot*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed ... 530

Parishes (United, Divided, etc.)—Return presented, relative thereto [Address 23rd February; *Mr. Talbot*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 278] 530

Deaths from Starvation or Accelerated by Privation (London).—Return presented, relative thereto [Address 23rd March; *Mr. Talbot*]: to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 279] 531

Parliamentary Boroughs, Etc. (Diagrams).—Return presented, relative thereto [Address 7th May; *Mr. Kimber*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 280] 531

Probation of First Offenders.—Return presented, relative thereto [Address 6th July; *Sir Howard Vincent*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 281] 531

Trade Reports (Annual Series).—Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3042 to 3048 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 531

Local Taxation (Ireland) Returns.—Copy presented, of Returns of Local Taxation in Ireland for the year 1901–2 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 531

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Woolwich Arsenal Explosion—Provision for Widows and Children of Men Killed.—Question, Dr. Shipman (Northampton); Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 531

Enrolment of Naval Volunteers.—Question, Sir Thomas Dewar (Tower Hamlets, St. George's); Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster 531

Prisoners under the Vagrancy Act Sentenced to be Flogged.—Questions, Mr. Lloyd Morgan (Carmarthenshire, W.); Answers, Mr. Akers Douglas 532

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POSTAL FACILITIES AT RATHMULLEN, COUNTY DONEGAL.—Question, Mr. O'Doherty (Donegal, N.); Answer, Mr. Austen Chamberlain 532

EXTRA REMUNERATION OF SUB-POSTMASTERS.—Question, Mr. Schwann (Manchester, N.); Answer, Mr. Austen Chamberlain 532

GERMAN DUTIES ON BRITISH PRODUCE.—Question, Colonel Sadler (Middlesbrough); Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour 533

CANADIAN EXPORTS SHIPPED THROUGH AMERICAN PORTS.—Question, Mr. Partington (Derbyshire, High Peak); Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour ... 534

INADEQUACY OF COTTAGE ACCOMMODATION AT ERPINGHAM, NORFOLK.—Question, Mr. Schwann; Answer, Mr. Walter Long 534

LONDON EDUCATION.—Question, Dr. Macnamara; Answer, Sir William Anson 535

EXPORTS FROM INDIA.—Question, Sir Mancherjee Bhownaggree (Bethnal Green, N.E.); Answer, Lord George Hamilton 535

IMPROVED LANDING ACCOMMODATION AT KINNAGOE BAY, CO. DONEGAL.—Question, Mr. O'Doherty; Answer, Mr. Wyndham... 535

IRISH MODEL SCHOOLS INQUIRY.—Question, Mr. Dillon (Mayo, E.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 536

CONSTRUCTION OF PIERS AT GORTNASATE AND FALCHOMB, CO. DONEGAL.—Question, Mr. Hugh Law (Donegal, W.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham ... 537

MILITARY BANDS AT SUNDAY CONCERTS.—Question, Mr. Freeman Thomas (Hastings); Answer, Mr. Brodrick 537

TRANSVAAL DIAMOND ORDINANCE.—Question, Mr. Markham (Nottinghamshire, Mansfield); Answer, Mr. J. Chamberlain 538

SOUTH AFRICA—DUTY ON DYNAMITE.—Question, Mr. Markham; Answer, Mr. J. Chamberlain... 538

SCHOOLS IN CEYLON.—Question, Mr. Schwann; Answer, Mr. J. Chamberlain ...538

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

INDIA AND THE FISCAL INQUIRY.—Question, Mr. Mansfield (Lincolnshire, Spalding); Answer, The Under Secretary of State for India (Earl Percy, Kensington, S.)... 539

NATIONAL DEBT.—Question, Sir Edgar Vincent (Exeter); Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Ritchie, Croydon) 539

HANSOM CABS.—Questions, Sir Charles Cayzer (Barrow-in-Furness); Answers, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Akers Douglas, Kent, St. Augustine's)... 540

IRON AND STEEL RAILS.—Questions, Sir Charles Dilke (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean); Answers, The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Gerald Balfour, Leeds (Central), and The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Lord Cranborne, Rochester) 540

SHIPPING STATISTICS.—Question, Mr. Mansfield; Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour 541

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NONCONFORMIST TEACHERS IN CHURCH SCHOOLS.—Question, Sir Joseph Leese (Lancashire, Accrington); Answer, The Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Education (Sir William Anson, Oxford University) 541

EDUCATION EQUIPMENT OF THE VOLUNTARY SCHOOLS.—Question, Mr. Duncan (Yorkshire, W.R., Otley); Answer, Sir William Anson 542

IRISH MOTOR-CAR RACES—TELEGRAPHISTS' DUTIES.—Question, Mr. James O'Connor (Wicklow, W.); Answer, The Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Elliot, Durham) 542

POSTAL SERVICE AT PORTARLINGTON.—Question, Mr. Delany (Queen's Co., Ossory); Answer, Mr. Elliot 543

KILLOUGHY DISPENSARY MEDICAL OFFICER.—Question, Mr. Delany; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. Wyndham, Dover) 544

POOR LAW RELIEF IN IRELAND.—Question, Mr. O'Shee (Waterford, W.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 544

IRISH DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE.—CLERKS' SALARIES.—Question, Mr. O'Keely (Mayo, N.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 545

IRISH LABOURERS' GRIEVANCES.—Question, Mr. Sheehan (Cork Co., Mid); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 545

ROYAL IRISH CONSTABULARY.—Question, Mr. Sheehan; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 546

IRISH LAND ADMINISTRATION.—Question, Mr. O'Shee; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 546

LISTOWEL AND BALLYBUNION RAILWAY.—Question, Mr. Lundon (Limerick, E.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 547

LOUGH ERNE DRAINAGE CHARGES.—Questions, Mr. Edward Mitchell (Fermanagh, N.) and Mr. T. W. Russell (Tyrone, S.); Answers, Mr. Wyndham ... 548

LIMERICK COUNTY COUNCIL RATE.—Question, Mr. O'Shaughnessy (Limerick, W.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 548

ARKLOW LABOURER'S COTTAGE.—Question Mr. James O'Connor; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 549

NAAS LABOURERS' COTTAGE SCHEME.—Question, Mr. James O'Connor; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 549

IRISH GOLD ORNAMENTS—COST OF LEGAL PROCEEDINGS.—Questions, Mr. Whitley (Halifax) and Mr. W. Redmond (Clare, E.); Answers, The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.) ... 549

COST OF THE FISCAL INQUIRY.—Question, Mr. Mansfield; Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 550

COLONIAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO ARMY EXPENDITURE.—Question, Sir Charles Dilke; Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 551

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.—Question, Mr. Bryce (Aberdeen, S.); Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 551

Sheep Scab Bill.—Reported, with Amendments, from the Standing Committee on Trade, &c.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 282.]

Minutes of the Proceedings of the Standing Committee to be printed. [No. 282.]

Bill, as amended (in the Standing Committee), to be considered upon Thursday, and to be printed. [Bill 298.] 552

NEW MEMBER SWORN.—Arthur Henderson, Esquire, for the County of Durham (Barnard Castle Division) 552

HOUSE OF COMMONS (VENTILATION).—Report from the Select Committee, with Minutes of Evidence, brought up, and read.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 283.] 552

NEW BILL.

Wild Birds' Protection Acts Amendment Bill.—"To amend the Wild Birds' Protection Acts," presented by Mr. Sydney Buxton; supported by Sir John Stirling-Maxwell, Sir Robert Reid, Colonel Lockwood, and Sir Edward Grey; to be read a second time upon Tuesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 299.] 552

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (GOVERNMENT BUSINESS).

The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.) 552

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That, for the remainder of the Session, Government Business be not interrupted, except at half-past Seven of the Clock at an Afternoon Sitting, under the provisions of any Standing Order regulating the Sittings of the House, and may be entered upon at any hour, though opposed, and that at the conclusion of Government Business each day Mr. Speaker do adjourn the House without Question put."—(*Mr. A. J. Balfour.*)

Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman (Stirling Burghs) 559
Mr. Gibson Bowles (Lynn Regis) 561
Sir F. Dixon Hartland (Middlesex, Uxbridge) 563
Sir Charles Dilke (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean) 563
Mr. Charles McArthur (Liverpool, Exchange) 565
Mr. Caldwell (Lanarkshire, Mid) 565
Lord Hugh Cecil (Greenwich) 566
Mr. Cathcart Wason (Orkney and Shetland) 568
Mr. Dalziel (Kirkcaldy Burghs) 569
Mr. Courtenay Warner (Staffordshire, Lichfield) 570

Amendment proposed—

"In line 2, after the word 'session,' to insert the words 'except on such days as may be set apart for the discussion of fiscal policy.'"—(*Mr. Dalziel.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. A. J. Balfour... 570
Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman 574
Sir John Gorst (Cambridge University) 575
Lord Hugh Cecil (Greenwich) 578
Mr. Theodore Taylor (Lancashire, Radcliffe) 578

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 97; Noes, 194. (Division List No. 193.)

Main Question again proposed.

Lord Balcarres (Lancashire, Chorley) 581
Mr. Herbert Roberts (Denbighshire, W.)... 583
Mr. Disraeli (Cheshire, Altrincham) 583
Mr. A. J. Balfour... 583
Mr. Moon (St. Pancras, N.) 584
Mr. Weir (Ross and Cromarty) 584

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 231; Noes, 93. (Division List No. 194)

Ordered, That, for the remainder of the Session, Government Business be not interrupted, except at half-past Seven of the Clock at an Afternoon Sitting, under the provisions of any Standing Order regulating the Sittings of the House, and may be entered upon at any hour, though opposed, and that at the conclusion of Government Business each day Mr. Speaker do adjourn the House without Question put.

Sugar Convention Bill—[SECOND READING].—Order for Second Reading read.

The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Gerald Balfour, Leeds, Central) 587

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Mr. Lough (Islington, W.) 598
Mr. Gibson Bowles (Lynn Regis) 611

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day three months.'"—(*Mr. Lough*).

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

Mr. Wylie (Dumbartonshire) 622
Sir James Joicey (Durham, Chester-le-Street) 624
Mr. White Ridley (Stalybridge) 626

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the debate stood adjourned till this Evening's Sitting.

EVENING SITTING.

Sugar Convention Bill.—Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Amendment to Question [28th July], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Which Amendment was—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day three months.'"—(*Mr. Lough.*)

Question again proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

Debate resumed.

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Mr. White Ridley 627
Mr. Cawley (Lancashire, Prestwich) 632
Mr. Platt-Higgins (Salford, N.) 634
Sir John Gorst (Cambridge University) 638
Mr. Bryce (Aberdeen, S.) 641
The Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade (Mr. Bonar Law, Glasgow, Blackfriars)... 650
Mr. Fletcher Moulton (Cornwall, Launceston) 660

Motion made, and Question, "That the debate be now adjourned"—(*Mr. Griffith Boscawen*)—put and agreed to.

Debate to be resumed to-morrow.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.—That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to amend the Locomotives on Highways Act, 1896." [Motor-Cars Bill (Lords).]... 668

PUBLIC BUILDINGS EXPENSES (CONSOLIDATED FUND).—Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [27th July], "That this House will, this day, resolve itself into a Committee to consider of making further provision for defraying the expenses of the purchase of land and buildings, and the construction of buildings and works in connection with certain public Departments, and of authorising the payment, out of the Consolidated Fund, and out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of such sums as may be necessary for those purposes."—(*Mr. Elliot.*)

Question again proposed.

Debate resumed.

Question put, and agreed to.

Resolved: That this House will, this day, resolve itself into a Committee to consider of making further provision for defraying the expenses of the purchase of land and buildings, and the construction of buildings and works in connection with certain public Departments, and of authorising the payment, out of the Consolidated Fund, and out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of such sums as may be necessary for those purposes... 668

Patriotic Fund Bill.—Read a second time, and committed for this day ... 668

Whereupon, in pursuance of the Order of the House of the 28th day of July, Mr. Speaker adjourned the House without Question put.

Adjourned at twenty-five minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS, WEDNESDAY, 29TH JULY, 1903.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Harrow Road and Paddington Tramways Bill.—London United Tramways Bill.—Lords' Amendments considered, and agreed to... 669

Bournemouth Gas and Water Bill [LORDS.]—Scottish Ontario and Manitoba Land Company Bill [Lords].—As amended, considered: to be read the third time 669

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Scottish Central Electric Power Bill [Lords].—Read a second time, and committed 669

Perth Corporation (Tramways) Order Confirmation Bill [Lords].—Aberdeen Corporation Tramways Order Confirmation Bill [Lords].—Read the third time, and passed, without Amendment 669

Glasgow Corporation (Police) Order Confirmation Bill [Lords].—Irvine and District Water Board Confirmation Bill [Lords].—Considered; to be read the third time upon Friday 669

Wick and Pulteney Harbours Order Confirmation Bill.—Considered; to be read the third time upon Friday 669

Tramways Orders Confirmation (No. 1) Bill [Lords].—Tramways Orders Confirmation (No. 2) Bill [Lords].—As amended, considered; to be read the third time To-morrow 669

Bradford Corporation Bill [Lords].—Reported, with Amendments, from the Police and Sanitary Committee; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 669

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

Army (Volunteer Rifle Ranges).—Copy presented, of Statement showing the allotment of the £170,000 provided in the Military Works Loan (Head 3, Sub-head 2), for the purpose of assisting Volunteers in connection with expenditure on Rifle Ranges [by Command]; to lie upon the Table ... 669

Naval Expenditure and Mercantile Marine (Great Britain, Etc.).—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 29th June; *Sir John Colomb*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 284.] 670

Civil Services (Supplementary Estimates, 1903–4).—Estimate presented, of the Further Sums required to be voted for the Service of the year ending 31st March, 1904 [by Command]; Referred to the Committee of Supply, and to be printed. [No. 285] 670

Civil Service Commission.—Copy presented, of Forty-seventh Report of the Commissioners, with Appendix [by Command]; to lie upon the Table ... 670

Superannuation Act, 1887.—Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 10th July, 1903, granting a retired allowance under the Act to Alfred Flood Baker, a second division clerk in the Savings Bank Department of the General Post Office [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 670

Charitable Donations and Bequests (Ireland).—Copy presented, of Fifty-eighth Annual Report of the Commissioners of Charitable Donations and Bequests for Ireland [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 670

Metropolitan Water Companies (Accounts).—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 21st July; *Mr. Grant Lawson*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 286] 670

Grenada.—Copy presented, of Regulations for providing Gratuities to Prisoners on their discharge from Prison [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

Papers laid upon the Table by the Clerk of the House 670

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CHAMBER OF LONDON.—Annual Accounts of the Chamberlain of London for the year 1902 [by Act]; to be printed. [No. 287] 671

LUNACY.—Copy of Return to the Lord Chancellor of the number of visits made, and the number of patients seen, by the several Commissioners in Lunacy during the six months ending on the 30th June, 1903 [by Act] ... 671

PUBLIC WORKS LOANS BILL.—Copy ordered, "of Statements of Particulars of Loans of which the balances outstanding are proposed to be remitted or written off (in whole or in part) from the Assets of the Local Loans Fund." (*Mr. Elliott*) 671

CANADA (PREFERENTIAL TARIFF FOR GOODS FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM.)—Return ordered, "of the yearly value of Imports for consumption from the United Kingdom and the United States into Canada since the Canadian Preferential Tariff for British goods came into force, and of the different rebates on the duty allowed on goods from the United Kingdom, and the yearly population of Canada during that period."—(*Mr. Alfred Davies.*) ... 671

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PHYSICAL TRAINING IN SCOTLAND—PROGRESS OF INTER-DEPARTMENTAL COMMITTEE.—Question, Mr. Shaw-Stewart (Renfrewshire, E.); Answer, Mr. A. Graham Murray 672

DATE OF OPENING OF MAYFAIR TELEPHONE EXCHANGE.—Question, Captain Jessel (St. Pancras, S.); Answer, Mr. Austen Chamberlain 672

GENERAL POST OFFICE—TUBE ATTENDANTS AND LOBBY OFFICERS.—Question, Mr. Patrick O'Brien (Kilkenny); Answer, Mr. Austen Chamberlain ... 672

GLASGOW PUBLIC MARKET—CATTLE WEIGHBRIDGE.—Question, Mr. Lough (Islington, W.); Answer, Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes 673

COTTON, WOOLLEN AND IRON GOODS RETURN.—Question, Mr. White Ridley (Stalybridge); Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour... 674

ANNUAL LEAVE OF CUSTOMS ASSISTANT CLERKS.—Question, Mr. Claude Hay (Shoreditch, Hoxton); Answer, Mr. Elliot 675

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APPLICATION OF MR. TRESTON OF GORT FOR GUN LICENCE.—Question, Mr. Duffy (Galway, S.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 676

SALARIES OF IRISH NATIONAL SCHOOL TEACHERS.—Question, Mr. MacVeagh (Down, S.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham... 676

APPLICATIONS FOR TRANSFER FROM CONSTABLES STATIONED AT RUSHARKIN, CO. ANTRIM.—Question, Mr. MacVeagh; Answer, Mr. Wyndham .. 677

IRISH LAND ACT—APPLICATIONS FOR POSTS IN CONNECTION WITH NEW DEPARTMENT.—Question, Mr. Lundon (Limerick, E.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 677

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Distribution of South African War Medals.—Question, Mr. Mansfield (Lincolnshire, Spalding); Answer, Mr. Brodrick 678

Improved Wages in Dockyard Trades.—Question, Mr. Reginald Lucas (Portsmouth); Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster 678

Paymasters in the Navy.—Question, Mr. John Howard (Kent, Faversham); Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster 678

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Army Text Books.—Question, Sir Francis Evans (Maidstone); Answer, The Financial Secretary to the War Office (Lord Stanley, Lancashire, Westhoughton) 679

Hospital for Royal Naval College, Osborne.—Question, Major Seely (Isle of Wight); Answer, The Civil Lord of the Admiralty (Mr. Pretyman, Suffolk, Woodbridge) 679

Imports of British Colonies.—Question, Mr. Levy (Leicestershire, Loughborough); Answer, The Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. J. Chamberlain, Birmingham, W.) 680

Canada and Germany.—Question, Mr. Winston Churchill (Oldham); Answer, Mr. J. Chamberlain 680

Trinidad Dsturbances.—Queston, Mr. Weir (Ross and Cromarty); Answer, Mr. J. Chamberlain 681

Canadian Tariff Policy.—Questions, Mr. Labouchere (Northampton) and Mr. D. A. Thomas (Merthyr Tydvil); Answers, Mr. J. Chamberlain ... 681

Religious Orders in France.—Questions, Mr. T. L. Corbett (Down, N.), and Mr. MacVeagh (Down, S.); Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Lord Cranborne, Rochester)... 682

North Sea Fisheries Investigation.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Lord Cranborne 683

Revenue Returns.—Question, Mr. Herbert Roberts (Denbighshire, W.); Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Ritchie, Croydon)... ... 683

Cost of Education.—Question, Mr. Alfred Davies (Carmarthen Boroughs); Answer, Mr. Ritchie 684

Lightships and Wireless Telegraphy.—Question, Major Seely; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Gerald Balfour, Leeds, Central) 685

Statistics of British Imports.—Question, Mr. D. A. Thomas; Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour 685

The Board of Trade and the Fiscal Inquiry.—Question, Mr. D. A. Thomas; Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour 685

French Commercial Policy.—Question, Sir William Holland (Yorkshire, West Riding, Rotherham); Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour 686

Fiscal Inquiry.—Question, Sir William Holland; Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour 686

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POST OFFICE—WAGES INQUIRY.—Question, Mr. James O'Connor (Wicklow, W.); Answer, The Postmaster-General (Mr. Austen Chamberlain, Worcestershire, E.) 687

VACCINATION EXEMPTION APPLICATIONS AT BRENTFORD POLICE COURT.—Question, Mr. Levy; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Cochrane, Ayrshire) 687

ISLAND OF LEWIS.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, The Lord Advocate (Mr. A. Graham Murray, Buteshire) 687

QUEEN VICTORIA—PROPOSED STATUE IN WESTMINSTER HALL.—Questions, Mr. Plummer (Newcastle-on-Tyne) and Mr. Arthur Lee (Hampshire, Fareham); Answers, The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.) 688

ROYAL COMMISSION ON CIVIL SERVICE SUPERANNUATION.—Question, Mr. James O'Connor; Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 688

GERMANY AND CANADA.—Question, Mr. Labouchere; Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 688

Motor-Cars Bill [LORDS].—Read the first time; to be read a second time upon Friday, and to be printed. [Bill 301.]... 689

NEW BILLS.

Public Works Loans Bill.—"To grant money for the purpose of certain local loans out of the Local Loans Fund; and for other purposes relating to local loans." Presented by Mr. Elliot; to be read a second time to-morrow, and to be printed. [Bill 300.] 689

Sugar Convention Bill [SECOND READING].—Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Amendment proposed to Question [28th July], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Which Amendment was—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day three months.'"—(*Mr. Lough.*)

Question again proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

Debate resumed.

Mr. Griffith Boscawen (Kent, Tonbridge) 690
Mr. Kearley (Devonport) 696
Sir Walter Thorburn (Peebles, Selkirk) 704
Mr. Edmund Robertson (Dundee) 707
Mr. Winston Churchill (Oldham) 713
Mr. Austin Taylor (Liverpool, East Toxteth) 725
Mr. Levy (Leicestershire, Loughborough) 732
Mr. Cust (Southwark, Bermondsey) 737
Mr. James Reid (Greenock) 742
Mr. Robson (South Shields) 744
Sir Edgar Vincent (Exeter) 752
Mr. Lawrence (Liverpool, Abercrombie) 756

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the debate stood adjourned till this Evening's Sitting.

EVENING SITTING.

Sugar Convention Bill.—[SECOND READING].—Order read for resuming adjourned debate on Amendment proposed to Question [28th July], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Which Amendment was—

> "To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day three months.'"—(*Mr. Lough.*)

Question again proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

Debate resumed.

Mr. Lawrence 759
Mr. Duke (Plymouth) 767
Mr. Helme (Lancashire, Lancaster) 772
Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman (Stirling Burghs) 773
The Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. J. Chamberlain, Birmingham, W.) 782

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 224; Noes, 144. (Division List, No. 195.)

Main Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed for Monday next.

PUBLIC BUILDINGS EXPENSES [CONSOLIDATED FUND].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That it is expedient to make further provision for defraying the expenses of the purchase of Land and Buildings, and the construction of Buildings and Works, in connection with certain Public Departments, and to authorise the issue out of the Consolidated Fund of any sums not exceeding in the whole £1,790,000 for such purposes, and to authorise the Treasury to borrow for the purpose of providing money for sums to be issued out of the Consolidated Fund, or for the repayment of sums so issued, by means of Terminable Annuities for such period not exceeding thirty years from the dates of borrowing, such Annuities to be paid out of moneys to be provided by Parliament for the service of the Commissioners of Works, and if those moneys are insufficient, out of the Consolidated Fund."—(*Mr. Elliot.*)

Mr. Whitley (Halifax) 807
The Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Elliot, Durham) 808
Mr. Dalziel (Kirkcaldy Burghs) 808
Mr. Courtenay Warner (Staffordshire, Lichfield) 809
Mr. Elliot 810
Mr. Whitley 810
Mr. Lough (Islington, W.) 810
The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.) 811
Mr. Caldwell (Lanarkshire, Mid) 811
Mr. Dalziel 811
Mr. Gibson Bowles (Lynn Regis) 812
Mr. Whitley 812

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. Whitley*).

Mr. A. J. Balfour 813

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 34 ; Noes, 120. (Division List No. 196).

Original Question again proposed.

Mr. Soares (*Devonshire, Barnstaple*) 815

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out '£1,790,000,' and insert '£1,290,000.'"—(*Mr. Soares*).

Question proposed, "That £1,790,000' stand part of the Question."

Mr. Courtenay Warner 815

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 116 ; Noes, 26. (Division List No. 197).

Original Question again proposed.

Mr. Whitley 817
Mr. A. J. Balfour 817

Original Question put, and agreed to.

Resolution to be reported to-morrow.

Ireland Development Grant Bill.—[SECOND READING].

Mr. Wm. Redmond (*Clare, E.*) 817
Mr. Gibson Bowles (*Lynn Regis*) 818
The Chief Secretary for Ireland (*Mr. Wyndham, Dover*)... 818
Mr. Doogan (*Tyrone, E.*) 818
Col. Nolan (*Galway, N.*) 819
Mr. Caldwell (*Lanarkshire, Mid.*)... 819
Mr. Wyndham 819

Bill read a second time, and committed for Friday.

Bankers (Ireland) Act Repeal Bill.—Order for resuming Adjourned Debate on Second Reading [1st July] read, and discharged :—Bill withdrawn. ... 819

Justices of the Peace Bill [LORDS].—Order for Second Reading read, and discharged :—Bill withdrawn 820

Police Superannuation Bill.—Order for Second Reading read, and discharged :—Bill withdrawn 820

Bishopric of Bristol Bill [LORDS].—Order for Second Reading read, and discharged :—Bill withdrawn 820

Electric Lighting (London) Bill [LORDS].—Order for Second Reading read, and discharged :—Bill withdrawn 820

Poor Law (Dissolution of School Districts and Adjustments) Bill.—On the order to go into Committee on this Bill 820

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Mr. Dalziel (Kirkcaldy Burghs) 820

The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Walter Long, Bristol, S.) ... 820

Bill considered in Committee, and reported, without Amendment; to be read the third time upon Monday next.

Whereupon, in pursuance of the Order of the House of the 28th day of July, Mr. Speaker adjourned the House without Question put.

Adjourned at twenty-five minutes before Two o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS: THURSDAY, 30TH JULY, 1903.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

North Metropolitan Electric Power Supply Bill [H.L.].—Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Lord Lamington be proposed to the House as a member of the Select Committee on the said Bill in the place of the Earl of Denbigh, read and agreed to 821

Exeter Corporation Bill [H.L.].—Commons' Amendments considered and agreed to 821

Hainault Forest Bill.—The King's Consent signified; and Bill reported, with Amendments 821

North Metropolitan Electric Power Supply Bill [H.L.]—Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments 821

London County Council (Tramways and Improvements) Bill; London County Council (Money) Bill; South Shields Corporation Bill.—Read 3ª, with the Amendments, and passed, and returned to the Commons... ... 821

Perth Corporation (Tramways) Order Confirmation Bill [H.L.]; Aberdeen Corporation (Tramways) Order Confirmation Bill [H.L.]; Pentillie Estate Bill [H.L.].—Returned from the Commons agreed to 821

Tramways Orders Confirmation (No. 1) Bill [H.L.]; Tramways Orders Confirmation (No. 2) Bill [H.L.]; Manchester Southern Tramways Bill [H.L.].—Returned from the Commons agreed to, with Amendments ... 821

Barry Railway Bill [H.L.]; Dewsbury, Batley, and Birstal Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Worthing Corporation Tramways Bill [H.L.]—Returned from the Commons agreed to, with Amendments; the said Amendments considered, and agreed to 821

Great Northern, Piccadilly, and Brompton Railway (Various Powers) Bill; London County Council (General Powers) Bill; London, Tilbury, and Southend Railway Bill; Watford and Edgware Railway Bill; Harrow Road and Paddington Tramways Bill; London United Tramways Bill.—Returned from the Commons, with the Amendments agreed to 821

Birmingham Corporation Bill [H.L.]—Commons' Amendments considered, and agreed to 822

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 8) Bill.—Read 3ª (according to Order), and passed 822

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 5) Bill; Metropolitan Police Provisional Order Bill.—House in Committee (according to Order); Bills reported without amendment; Standing Committee negatived; and Bills to be read 3ª to-morrow.

Beckenham Urban District Council Bill [THIRD READING].—Bill read 3ª (according to order).

Lord Tweedmouth 822

Amendment moved—

> "In Clause 18, page 19, line 38, at the end of the Clause, to insert the following proviso: 'Provided also, that notwithstanding anything in this Act contained, the Council shall not construct the said Tramway No. 3 if the London County Council shall, in either of the Sessions of 1904 or 1905, obtain powers to construct a tramway between the same points as the said Tramway No. 3, and shall proceed to construct and complete the same as soon as possible after obtaining such powers, and on the completion and opening of the same for public traffic by the London County Council all powers for the construction of the said Tramway No. 3, by this Act given to the Council, shall absolutely cease and determine: Provided always that if the said London County Council shall not, before the thirtieth day of November one thousand nine hundred and four, have given notice of their intention to apply in either of the said Sessions for such powers as aforesaid, or having given notice of such intention shall not proceed with the promotion of a Bill or Order, or shall, before the said thirtieth day of November one thousand nine hundred and four, have informed the Council by notice in writing that they do not intend to construct such a tramway, then from and after the said thirtieth day of November one thousand nine hundred and four, or the abandonment of the said Bill or Order, or the receipt of such notice as last aforesaid (as the case may be), the powers by this Act conferred upon the Council of constructing the said Tramway No. 3 shall, notwithstanding anything in the foregoing proviso contained, be exerciseable by the Council.'"—(*Lord Tweedmouth.*)

The Chairman of Committees (*The Earl of Morley*) 825
Lord Tweedmouth 827

Amendment, by leave of the House, withdrawn.

Earl Stanhope 827

Amendment proposed—

> "To leave out Clause 40."—(*Earl Stanhope.*)

The Earl of Morley 828
Lord Kinnaird 830
Lord Wolverton 831

On question, Amendment agreed to.

Bill passed, and returned to the Commons.

RETURNS, REPORTS, &c.

TRANSVAAL.—Despatch from the Governor of the Transvaal respecting the position of British Indians in that Colony 831

CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION.—Forty-seventh Report of His Majesty's Civil Service Commissioners; with Appendix 831

Volunteer Rifle Ranges.—Statement showing the allotment of the £170,000, provided in the Military Works Loan (Head 3 Sub-head 2), for the purpose of assisting Volunteers in connection with expenditure on rifle ranges ... 831

Charitable Donations and Bequests (Ireland).—Fifty-eighth annual Report of the Commissioners 831

Post-Office.--Forty-ninth Report of the Postmaster-General.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table... 831

Lunacy.—Return to the Lord Chancellor of the number of visits made, and the number of patients seen by the several Commissioners in Lunacy during the six months ended the 30th June, 1903 831

Grenada.—Regulations for providing gratuities to prisoners on their discharge from prison 831

Bankruptcy.—Twentieth General Annual Report by the Board of Trade, under Section 131 of the Bankruptcy Act, 1883 832

Companies (Winding Up).—Twelfth General Annual Report by the Board of Trade, under Section 29 of the Companies (Winding-up) Act, 1890 ... 832

Greenwich Hospital and Travers' Foundation.—Statement of the estimated income and expenditure of Greenwich Hospital and of Travers' Foundation, for the year 1903-1904 832

Superannuation.—Treasury Minute, dated 10th July, 1903, granting a retired allowance to Alfred Flood Bakers, a second division clerk in the Savings Bank Department of the General Post Office, under Section 2 of the Superannuation Act 832

London Corporation.—Annual accounts of the Chamberlain of London.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table 832

Licensing Acts (Scotland) Consolidation and Amendment Bill—[Second Reading.].—Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

The Secretary for Scotland (*Lord Balfour of Burleigh*) 832

Moved that the Bill be now read 2ª—(*Lord Balfour of Burleigh.*)

The Earl of Camperdown 842
The Earl of Aberdeen 845

On Question, Bill read 2ª and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Tuesday next.

Public Offices (Dublin) Bill.—House in Committee (according to order). Bill reported without Amendment. Standing Committee negatived ; Bill to be read 3ª to morrow 846

Military Lands Bill.—Amendment reported (according to order) and Bill to be read 3ª to-morrow 846

Light Railways Bill [H.L.].—Read 3ª (according to order). An Amendment (Privilege) made. Bill passed, and sent to the Commons 846

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London Education Bill.—House in Committee (according to Order).

[The Earl of MORLEY in the Chair.]

Clause 1 agreed to.

The President of the Board of Education (*The Marquess of Londonderry*) 847
Lord Reay 847

Amendment moved.

"In page 1, line 13, to leave out from the word 'by' to the first 'the' in line 14."—(*Lord Reay.*)

The Marquess of Londonderry 848
Lord Monkswell 849
Earl Spencer 849
Lord Tweedmouth 849
The Lord President of the Council (*The Duke of Devonshire*) 850
Lord Davey 852
The Marquess of Londonderry 852
Lord Colchester 853

On Question, whether the words proposed to be left out shall stand part of the clause.

Their Lordships divided:—Contents, 56; Not-Contents, 23.

The Lord Bishop of Rochester 853

Amendment moved—

"In page 1, line 16, to leave out the words 'two-thirds' and to insert the words 'one-third'; and in line 17, to leave out the words 'one-third' and to insert the words 'two-thirds.'"—(*The Lord Bishop of Rochester.*)

Lord Reay 855
The Marquess of Londonderry 856
Lord Davey 856
Lord Tweedmouth 857
Lord Monkswell 858
Lord Burghclere 859
The Lord Archbishop of Canterbury 859
Earl Carrington 860

On Question, whether the words proposed to be left out shall stand part of the clause.

Their Lordships divided: Contents, 49; Not-Contents, 24.

Drafting Amendments agreed to.

Lord Reay... 861

Amendment moved—

"In page 1, line 24, after the word 'provision' to insert the words 'the existing bodies of managers shall be continued until the new bodies of managers are appointed.'"—(*Lord Reay.*)

The Marquess of Londonderry 861

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Amendment, by leave of the House, withdrawn.

Clause 2, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 3.

The Marquess of Londonderry 862

Amendment moved—

"After Clause 2, to insert the following new clauses:—'(1.) As from the passing of this Act, any public elementary school provided by the London School Board before the passing of this Act, which is wholly or partly situated outside the county of London, shall, for the purposes of this Act, be treated as, and for the purposes of the principal Act be deemed to have been, wholly situated within the County of London and within the nearest Metropolitan Borough. (2.) Any public elementary school provided by the local education authority which is situated partly in one Metropolitan Borough and partly in another shall, for the purposes of this Act, be deemed to be situated in such one of those boroughs as the local education authority determine.'"—(*The Marquess of Londonderry.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Lord Reay 862

Amendment moved—

"To insert the following new clause:—'Sub-section 3 of Section 5 of the London Government Act 1899, shall not apply to proceedings under this Act.'"—(*Lord Reay.*)

The Marquess of Londonderry 863

Amendment, by leave of the House, withdrawn.

Lord Reay 864

Amendment moved—

"To insert as a new clause (B) 'The local education authority may aid the education of scholars in public elementary schools who are exempt from the legal obligation to attend school by scholarships, free education, grants of books, or otherwise.'"—(*Lord Reay.*)

The Marquess of Londonderry 864

Amendment, by leave of the House, withdrawn.

Clause 3 agreed to.

Clause 4.

Amendment moved—

"In page 2, line 20, after the word 'shall' to insert the words 'except as expressly provided.'"—(*The Marquess of Londonderry.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Clause 4, as amended, agreed to.

Schedule 1.

The Lord Bishop of Hereford 865

Amendment moved—

"In page 3, after paragraph (3) to insert as a new paragraph the words: 'The provisions of Sub-section 1 of Section 17 of the principal Act shall not apply, and the Education Committee of the London County Council shall consist of—(1) One member from each electoral division for the County Council, to be elected at the same time as the members of the County Council, on the same franchise and by the same process, women to be eligible for election equally with men; (2) Nineteen members, appointed from their own body by the County Council; (3) Ten members, men or women experienced in education, appointed by the County Council. This Committee shall come into existence at the time of the next County Council election, the Act to be administered meanwhile by the present School Board together with the twenty-nine persons appointed by the County Council under (2) and (3) above, acting as the Education Committee of the County Council.' "—(*The Lord Bishop of Hereford.*)

Earl Spencer 868
The Marquess of Londonderry 868

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

The Lord Bishop of Hereford 869

Amendment moved—

"In page 3, line 22, to leave out from the word 'education' to the end of paragraph 4, and insert the words 'shall, by scheme or order, define the use to be made of any endowment to which this sub-section would have applied. Under any such scheme or order, the endowment shall be used for educational purposes, and due regard shall primarily be had to the educational interests of the children of the locality or district for which the benefits of the endowment were originally intended.' "—(*The Lord Bishop of Hereford.*)

The Lord Bishop of London 871
Lord Colchester 871
Lord Davey 872
The Lord Chancellor (*The Earl of Halsbury*) 873

On Question, Amendment negatived.

The Marquess of Londonderry 873

Amendment moved—

"In page 4, line 3, after paragraph 6, insert as a new paragraph, 'Where the London County Council delegate to their education committee any powers, and the acts and proceedings of the committee as respects the exercise of those powers are not required to be submitted to the Council for their approval, Sub-section 1 of Section 233 of the Municipal Corporations Act, 1882 (which provides for the inspection and the taking of copies of Minutes) shall apply to the Minutes of the committee relating to the exercise of those powers as it applies to the Minutes of the Council.' "—(*The Marquess of Londonderry.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Earl Beauchamp 874

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Amendment moved—

"In page 4, after paragraph 7, to insert as a new paragraph the words, 'All public elementary voluntary schools within the area shall be maintained by the local education authority as if they were provided schools, provided that the local education authority shall, by agreement, rent the school premises from the trustees, free use of the premises being granted to the denominations under whose auspices the schools have hitherto been conducted for purposes of denominational religious teaching outside the ordinary hours of the school time-table, to the children of such parents as make written application for the same. If any question arises under this section between the local education authority and the managers of a school not provided by the authority in respect to the use and rental of the premises, the matter shall be determined by the Board of Education.'"—(*Earl Beauchamp.*)

The Marquess of Londonderry 875
Lord Davey 875
The Lord Bishop of Rochester 877
The Lord Bishop of Hereford 878

On Question, Amendment negatived.

Lord Burghclere 878

Amendment moved—

"In page 4, after paragraph 7, to insert as a new paragraph the words, 'It shall be the duty of the education authority to make adequate provision of training colleges or of day training colleges, to which all qualified pupils shall be admitted without inquiry into their religious beliefs, and in which no religious catechism or formulary which is distinctive of any particular denomination shall be used.'"—(*Lord Burghclere.*)

The Marquess of Londonderry 880
Earl Spencer 881
The Duke of Devonshire 882

On Question, Amendment negatived.

The Earl of Portsmouth 883

Amendment proposed—

"In page 4, after paragraph 7, to insert the words, 'No teacher shall be required, as a condition of being appointed or continuing a teacher in any school or college aided or maintained by the local education authority, to belong to any particular religious denomination, or to attend or abstain from attending any place of religious worship, or religious observance, or Sunday School.'"—(*The Earl of Portsmouth.*)

The Lord Archbishop of Canterbury 885
The Lord Bishop of Hereford 888
Lord Kinnaird 889
Earl Spencer 890

On Question, their Lordships divided:—Contents, 15; Non-Contents, 33.

Schedule 1, as amended, agreed to.

Schedule 2 and title agreed to

Standing Committee negatived. The Report of Amendments to be received on Tuesday next; and Bill to be printed as amended. (No. 182.)

Metropolitan Streets Bill.—Read 3ª (according to order), and passed ... 891

House adjourned at a quarter past Nine o'clock, till To-morrow, a quarter past Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: THURSDAY, 30TH JULY, 1903.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Great Western Railway Bill; Lancashire and Yorkshire and London and North Western Railways (Steam Vessels) Bill; Neath, Pontardawe, and Brynaman Railway Bill.—Lords' Amendments considered, and agreed to... 891

Chard Corporation Gas and Electricity Bill [LORDS]; Gosport and Fareham Tramways Bill [Lords].—Read the third time, and passed, with Amendments 891

Gas and Water Orders Confirmation Bill [LORDS].—Reported, with Amendments [Provisional Orders confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table.
Bill, as amended, to be considered to-morrow 891

Education Board Provisional Order Confirmation (London) Bill [LORDS].—Reported, with Amendments [Provisional Order confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table.
Bill, as amended, to be considered to-morrow 891

Bury and District Joint Water Board Bill [LORDS].—Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed 891

Rochester Corporation Tramways and Improvements Bill [LORDS].—Read the third time, and passed, with Amendments 891

South Eastern and London, Chatham and Dover Railways Bill [LORDS].—To be read the third time to-morrow 892

Manchester Corporation Bill [LORDS]; Somerset and District Electric Power Bill [Lords].—As amended, considered; to be read the third time... 892

Wood Green Urban District Council Bill (BY ORDER).—Consideration of Lords' Amendments deferred till Monday next 892

Birmingham District Tramways Bill [LORDS] (BY ORDER).—Read the third time, and passed, with Amendments 892

Tramways Orders Confirmation (No. 1) Bill [LORDS]; Tramways Orders Confirmation (No. 2) Bill [Lords].—Read the third time, and passed, with Amendments 892

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have agreed to—Alexandra Park and Palace Bill, without Amendment 892

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Baker Street and Waterloo Railway (Extension of Time) Bill, with Amendments 892

Amendments to—Gas Orders Confirmation (No. 2) Bill [Lords]; Bournemouth Corporation Tramways Bill [Lords]; Chatham and District Light Railways Bill [Lords]; Willesden Urban District Council Bill [Lords], without Amendment 892

Lanarkshire Tramways Order Confirmation Bill [LORDS] (BY ORDER).—Considered 892

And it being a quarter past Two of the Clock, further consideration was postponed under Standing Order No. 8 until Tuesday next, at the Evening Sitting.

PETITION.

DETENTION OF POOR PERSONS (SCOTLAND) BILL.—Petition from Lesmahagow, in favour; to lie upon the Table 892

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

COTTON FACTORIES.—Return presented, relative thereto [Address 7th April—*Sir William Holland*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 289.] 893

MERCHANT SHIPPING, 1902,—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 27th July—*Mr. Gerald Balfour*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 290.] 893

COMPANIES (WINDING UP).—Copy presented of Twelfth General Annual Report by the Board of Trade [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 291.] 893

BANKRUPTCY.—Copy presented of Twentieth General Annual Report by the Board of Trade under the Bankruptcy Act, 1883 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 292.] 893

TRANSVAAL (BRITISH INDIANS).—Copy presented of Despatch from the Governor of the Transvaal respecting the position of British Indians in that Colony [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 893

POST OFFICE.—Copy presented of Forty-ninth Report of the Postmaster-General [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 893

LOCAL TAXATION LICENCES, 1902–3.—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 23rd July—*Mr. Grant Lawson*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 293.] 893

POOR RELIEF (ENGLAND AND WALES).—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 27th July—*Mr. Grant Lawson*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 294.]

Papers laid upon the Table by the Clerk of the House... 893

INQUIRIES INTO CHARITIES (ADMINISTRATIVE COUNTY OF DURHAM).—Further Return relative thereto [ordered 14th February, 1900; *Mr. Grant Lawson*]; to be printed. [No. 295.] 893

INQUIRY INTO CHARITIES (COUNTY OF LANCASTER).—Further Return relative thereto [ordered 8th August, 1898; *Mr. Grant Lawson*]; to be printed. [No. 296]. 894

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SUGAR.—Return ordered, "of the price of Sugar in the markets of Calcutta, Bombay, Madras, Kurrachee, and Rangoon on the 30th day of June, 1899, 1900, 1901, 1902, and 1903, with the duties chargeable on each of these dates."—(*Colonel Denny.*) 894

IMPERIAL DEFENCE AND CONSULAR SERVICE.—Return ordered, "of the total Cost of Imperial Defence, including India and the Crown Colonies, and of the total Cost of the Diplomatic and Consular Service to Great Britain and Ireland."—(*Mr. Cathcart Wason.*) 894

SUGAR CONVENTION (EXPENSES AND DUTIES.)—Committee to consider of authorising the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of certain expenses of the Permanent Commission in pursuance of any Act of the present session to make provision for giving effect to a Convention signed the 5th day of March, 1902, in relation to sugar, and of imposing certain duties in pursuance of such Act (King's Recommendation signified), To-morrow.—(*Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) 894

COAL TABLES, 1902.—Copy ordered, "of Statistical Tables relating to the production, consumption, and imports and exports of coal in the British Empire and the principal foreign countries in each year from 1883 to 1902, as far as the particulars can be stated; together with statements showing the production of lignite and petroleum in the principal producing countries for a series of years (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 328, of Session 1902)."—(*Mr. Gerald Balfour*) 894

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

INTERNATIONAL CURRENCY.—Question, Mr. Field (Dublin, St. Patrick); Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 894

NORTHERN TRANSVAAL RAILWAY.—Question, Sir Robert Hermon Hodge (Oxfordshire, Henley); Answer, Mr. J. Chamberlain 895

EXACTION OF TOLLS BY NATIVE CHIEFS AT IBADAN.—Question, Mr. Buchanan (Perthshire, E.); Answer, Mr. J. Chamberlain 895

IMPROVEMENTS OF TRANSVAAL CENTRAL RAILWAY.—Question, Mr. Buchanan; Answer, Mr. J. Chamberlain 896

CANADIAN DUTY ON ENGLISH WOOL.—Question, Mr. Duncan (Yorkshire, W.R., Otley); Answer, Mr. J. Chamberlain 896

PENSIONS FOR WIDOWS OF SOLDIERS KILLED IN TIME OF PEACE.—Question, Mr. Kearley (Devonport); Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 896

SITUATION OF PROPOSED VICTORIA MEMORIAL.—Question, Mr. Lawrence (Liverpool, Abercrombie); Answer, Mr. Victor Cavendish 897

REPATRIATION OF COOLIES EXPORTED FOR LABOUR.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Lord George Hamilton 897

COOLIES IN ASSAM.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Lord George Hamilton... 897

DETENTION OF SIRDAR AND COOLIES ON EASTERN BENGAL RAILWAY.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Lord George Hamilton 898

PUBLICATION OF MR. ROBERTSON'S REPORT ON INDIAN RAILWAYS.—Question, Mr. Ashton (Bedfordshire, Luton); Answer, Lord George Hamilton ... 898

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OUTBREAK OF CHOLERA AND TYPHUS AT QUETTA.—Question, Mr. Schwann (Manchester, N.); Answer, Lord George Hamilton... 899

DURBHANGA CASE.—Question, Mr. Schwann; Answer, Lord George Hamilton 899

SECONDARY SCHOOLS—SUPERFICIAL AREA PER SCHOLAR.—Question, Colonel Bowles (Middlesex, Enfield); Answer, Sir William Anson... 900

IMPORTS AND EXPORTS OF UNITED KINGDOM, UNITED STATES, GERMANY AND FRANCE.—Question, Mr. Mansfield (Lincolnshire, Spalding); Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour 900

IRISH NATIONAL SCHOOL TEACHERS' PENSION—CAPITAL SUM IN LIEU OF PENSION.—Question, Mr. Devlin (Kilkenny, N.); Answer, Mr. Elliot ... 900

FISHERY RIGHTS IN LIMERICK.—Question, Mr. Joyce (Limerick); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 901

IRISH EDUCATION—CASE OF WILLIAM BOYLE.—Question, Mr. MacVeagh (Down, S.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham... 901

MARYBOROUGH HEATH RIFLE RANGE.—Question, Mr. Kennedy (Westmeath, N); Answer, Mr. Brodrick 902

ACCOMMODATION AT WHALE ISLAND NAVAL BARRACKS.—Question, Sir John Colomb (Great Yarmouth); Answer, Mr. Arnold Foster 902

GOSPORT WATER SUPPLY.—Question, Mr. Arthur Lee (Hampshire, Fareham); Answer, Mr. Arnold Forster 903

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

CORK HARBOUR—SOLDIERS' FATIGUE DUTIES.—Question, General Laurie (Pembroke and Haverfordwest); Answer, The Financial Secretary to the War Office (Lord Stanley, Lancashire, Westhoughton) 903

SPECIAL PAY WARRANT OF 26TH MARCH, 1902.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Lord Stanley 904

AUSTRALIAN SQUADRON.—Question, Mr. Cathcart Wason (Orkney and Shetland); Answer, The Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Arnold Forster, Belfast, W.) 904

THE COLONIES AND PREFERENTIAL TARIFFS.—Questions, Sir M. Hicks Beach (Bristol, W.); Answers, The Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. J. Chamberlain, Birmingham, W.) 904

HONG KONG PLAGUE.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Mr. J. Chamberlain ... 907

TRINIDAD DISTURBANCES.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Mr. J. Chamberlain 907

FIJI.—Questions, Mr. Cathcart Wason; Answers, Mr. J. Chamberlain... ... 908

FAROE ISLANDS.—Question, Mr. Cathcart Wason; Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Gerald Balfour, Leeds, Central) 909

CERTIFICATED PILOTS OF FOREIGN NATIONALITY.—Questions, Mr. Orr Ewing and General Laurie; Answers, Mr. Gerald Balfour 909

GLASGOW RAILWAY ACCIDENT.—Question, Mr. Orr-Ewing; Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour 909

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GOVERNMENT MOTOR-CAR DRIVERS.—Question, General Laurie; Answer, The Under Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Cochrane, Aryshire, N.) 910

METROPOLITAN POLICE FUND.—Question, Mr. Claude Hay (Shoreditch, Hoxton); Answer, Mr. Cochrane... 910

ECCLESIASTICAL GRANTS.—Question, Mr. Brynmor Jones (Swansea Districts); Answer, The Parliamentary Ecclesiastical Commissioner (Mr. Lees Knowles, Salford, W.) 911

HYDE PARK AMBULANCES.—Question, Mr. Claude Hay; Answer, Mr. Victor Cavendish (Derbyshire, W.) 912

ACHONRY (SLIGO) SCHOOLS.—Question, Mr. O'Dowd (Sligo, S.); Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. Wyndham, Dover) 912

FITZMAURICE ESTATES.—Question, Mr. Lundon (Limerick, E.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 913

KILLAN DISPENSARY DOCTOR.—Questions, Mr. Patrick O'Brien (Kilkenny) and Mr. Delany (Queen's County, Ossory); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 913

LICENCES TO SELL ARMS IN NORTH TIPPERARY.—Question, Mr. P. J. O'Brien (Tipperary, N.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 914

CLERGY DISCIPLINE BILL.—Question, Mr. Charles M'Arthur (Liverpool, Exchange); Answer, The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.) 915

ST. JUDE'S, BIRMINGHAM.—Question, Mr. Brynmor Jones; Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 915

LICENSING LEGISLATION.—Questions, Mr. T. W. Russell (Tyrone, S.), and Sir Wilfrid Lawson (Cornwall, Camborne); Answers, Mr. A. J. Balfour ... 916

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.—Questions, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman (Stirling Burghs), Mr. Lough (Islington, W.), Mr. MacVeagh (Down, S.), Dr. Farquharson (Aberdeenshire, W.), Mr. Gibson Bowles (Lynn Regis), Mr. Whitley (Halifax), and Sir Charles Dilke (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean); Answers, Mr. A. J. Balfour 917

WORKMEN'S TRAINS.—Report from the Select Committee, with Minutes of Evidence and an Appendix brought up, and read [Inquiry not completed].

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 297.] 919

NEW BILLS.

Belfast (Petty Sessions Court) Bill.—"For the better administration of Law in the Petty Sessions Court of Belfast, Ireland," presented by Mr. Joseph Devlin; supported by Mr. Haviland-Burke, Mr. MacVeagh, Mr. Flynn, and Mr. Kilbride; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 302.] 919

Charitable Loan Societies (Ireland) Bill.—"To amend the Charitable Loan Societies (Ireland) Act, 1900," presented by Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 303.] 919

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Pilotage Bill.—"To amend the Law relating to Pilotage, so as to terminate the granting of Pilotage Certificates to masters or mates of vessels not registered at a port in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland," presented by Sir Seymour King; supported by Mr. Runciman, Sir Penrose Fitzgerald, Major Seely, Mr. James Reid, Sir John Colomb, Major Evans-Gordon, General Laurie, and Mr. Joyce; to be read a second time on Thursday next, and to be printed. [Bill 304.] 919

SUPPLY [20TH ALLOTTED DAY].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith) in the Chair.]

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS ESTIMATES, 1903–4.—CLASS II.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £26,500, be granted to His Majesty to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1904, for the salaries and expenses of the Department of His Majesty's Secretary of State for the Colonies, including a grant in aid of certain expenses connected with emigration."

Mr. Marsham (Nottinghamshire, Mansfield) 920
Mr. Lawrence (Liverpool, Abercrombie) 935
Sir Robert Reid (Dumfries Burghs) 937
Sir Brampton Gurdon (Norfolk, N.) 940

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £26,400, be granted for the said Service."—(*Sir Brampton Gurdon.*)

Mr. Cawley (Lancashire, Prestwich) 941
Mr. Fuller (Wiltshire, Westbury) 942
Mr. Sydney Buxton (Tower Hamlets, Poplar) 942
Mr. Boland (Kerry, S.) 944
Mr. Lloyd-George (Carnarvon Boroughs) 947
The Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. J. Chamberlain, Birmingham, W.) 949
Mr. Cathcart Wason (Orkney and Shetland) 968
Mr. Thomas Shaw (Hawick Burghs) 971
Mr. Charles Devlin (Galway) 972
Mr. William Redmond (Clare E.)... 975
Mr. Bryn Roberts (Carnarvonshire, Eifion) 975
Mr. J. Chamberlain 976
Mr. Wm. Redmond... 978

Mr. SECRETARY CHAMBERLAIN rose in his place, and claimed to move—"That the Question be now put."

Question put, "That the Question be now put."

The Committee divided: Ayes, 183; Noes, 83. (Division List No. 199.)

Question put accordingly.

The Committee divided: Ayes, 76; Noes, 183. (Division List No. 199.)

Whereupon Mr. SECRETARY CHAMBERLAIN claimed, "That the Original Question be now put."

Original Question put accordingly.

The Committee divided: Ayes, 184; Noes, 74. (Division List No. 200.)

EVENING SITTING.

STANDING ORDERS.

The Chairman of Committees (Mr. J. W. Lowther, Cumberland, Penrith) 987
Lord Edmund Fitzmaurice 989

Standing Order 29, relating to Private Business, read, and amended, "in paragraph (D), by inserting in line 2, after the words 'Parish Council,' the words 'with the chairman of the parish meeting and.'"—*(The Chairman of Ways and Means.)*

Mr. J. W. Lowther. 989
Mr. Whitley (Halifax) 989
Sir Charles Renshaw (Renfrewshire, W.) 989

Standing Order 32 read, and amended, "in line 5, by leaving out the word '21st,' and inserting the word '17th.'" — *(The Chairman of Ways and Means.)*

Mr. J. W. Lowther 990

Standing Order 62 read, and amended, "in line 2, by leaving out the words 'after the first reading thereof,' and inserting the words 'within five weeks of the date on which the Petition for the same was endorsed by the Examiner.'"—*(The Chairman of Ways and Means.)*

Amendments proposed—

"In page 70, Standing Order 79, line 1, after the words 'Means,' insert the words 'or the counsel to Mr. Speaker.'"

"In line 1, leave out the words 'at the commencement of each session,' and insert the words 'on or before the 28th day of January in each year.'"

"In line 3, after the word 'Lords,' insert the words 'or with his counsel.'"—*(Mr. J. W. Lowther.)*

The Amendments were agreed to.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 71, leave out 'Standing Order 87,' and insert 'new Standing Order 87—87.' The Chairman of Ways and Means, and the Deputy Chairman, with not less than seven other persons, who shall be Members of this House, and shall be appointed by Mr. Speaker for such periods as he shall think fit, shall be referees of the House on private Bills, and shall have the assistance of the counsel to Mr. Speaker; such referees to form one or more courts, three at least to be required to constitute each court."—*(Mr. J. W. Lowther.)*

Mr. J. W. Lowther... 991

Amendment agreed to.

Standing Order 98 read and amended, "In line 3, by leaving out the word 'seven' and inserting the word 'ten.'"—*(The Chairman of Ways and Means.*

Mr. Whitley 991
Mr. J. W. Lowther 992

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Standing Order 109 read and amended, "In line 2, by leaving out from the word 'them,' to the end of the Standing Order, and inserting 'to the Committee on Unopposed Bills which shall be composed of five Members, namely, the Chairman of Ways and Means (who when present shall be ex-officio Chairman of every such Committee), the Deputy Chairman, two Members from time to time selected by the Chairman of Ways and Means from a panel to be appointed by the Committee of Selection at the commencement of every Session, and counsel to Mr. Speaker, and three shall be the quorum thereof.'"—(*The Chairman of Ways and Means.*)

Standing Order 110, read and repealed.—(*The Chairman of Ways and Means.*)

Standing Order 129, read and amended, "In line 6, by leaving out the words, 'not later than ten clear days after the First Reading of such Bill,' and inserting the words 'on or before the 12th day of February,' and at the end of the Standing Order to add the words, 'Provided that in the case of (a) any Bill brought from the House of Lords; and (b) any Bill as to which compliance with the Standing Order as to the time for depositing the Bill has been dispensed with; and (c) any Bill promoted by the London County Council introduced under Standing Order 194; a petition against the Bill may be deposited at any time not later than ten clear days after the First Reading of the Bill.'"—(*The Chairman of Ways and Means.*)

Mr. J. W. Lowther 992

Sir Charles Dilke 993

Mr. Bryce 993

Standing Order 133A read, and amended, "In line 1, by leaving out the words 'Where a chamber of commerce or agriculture or other similar body, sufficiently representing a particular trade or business,' and inserting the words 'Where any body of persons corporate or incorporate sufficiently representing a particular trade, business, or interest.'"—(*The Chairman of Ways and Means.*)

"In line 4, by leaving out the words 'or business,' and inserting the words 'business or interest.'"—(*The Chairman of Ways and Means.*)

Standing Order 134B read, and amended, "In line 3, by inserting after the word 'Borough,' the words 'or being a Joint Committee of Councils of administrative counties or County Boroughs.'"—(*The Chairman of Ways and Means.*)

Standing Order 135, read.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 77, Standing Order, 135, lines 1 and 2, to leave out the words 'in any street,' and insert 'situate in or having its access materially dependent on any street or road.'"—(*Mr. J. Lowther.*)

Question proposed, "that the words proposed to be left out stand part of the question."

Mr. Whitley 994

Mr. J. W. Lowther 995

Standing Order 137 read, and repealed.

Mr. Whitley 995

Lord Edmund Fitzmaurice 995

Ordered, "That in the case of any Bill relating to the generation of electricity for supply to persons or bodies other than the promoters, the Bill shall not be reported by the Committee until a Report from the Board of Trade on the powers sought has been laid before the Committee; and the Committee shall report specially to the House in what manner the recommendations or observations in the Report of the Board of Trade, and also in what manner the Clauses of the Bill relating to the powers sought, have been dealt with by the Committee."—(*The Chairman of Ways and Means.*)

Ordered, "That this Order be a Standing Order of this House."

Standing Order 193 read, and amended "In line 2, by leaving out the words 'first presented, which shall have been duly,' and inserting the words 'which shall be.'"

"In line 3, by leaving out the words 'and indorsed by one of the Examiners.'"—(*The Chairman of Ways and Means.*)

Mr. J. W. Lowther 996
Sir Wm. Tomlinson (Preston) 996

Standing Order 193A read, and amended "At end by leaving out the words 'the 1st day of June,' and inserting the word 'Whitsuntide.'"—(*The Chairman of Ways and Means.*)

Ordered, "That all Private Bills shall on the day previous to the day fixed for their being laid upon the Table of the House be deposited in the Private Bill Office, and shall be laid by one of the Clerks of that Office on the Table of the House, together with a list of such Bills."—(*The Chairman of Ways and Means.*)

Ordered, "That this Order be a Standing Order of this House."

Ordered, "That where the Examiner has endorsed the Petition for a Private Bill 'Standing Orders complied with,' the Bill shall be presented by being laid upon the Table of the House not later than one clear day after such endorsement, or if when it is endorsed the House is not sitting, then not later than one clear day after the first sitting thereof subsequent to such endorsement, and if the House is not sitting on the latest day on which the Bill ought to be laid upon the Table of the House, then the Bill shall be so laid on the first day on which the House again sits. Where the Examiner has reported with respect to any Private Bill that the Standing Orders have not been complied with, and the Report has been referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders, and the Select Committee on Standing Orders have reported that the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with, the Bill shall be presented by being laid upon the Table of the House not later than one clear day after the House has given leave to the parties to proceed with the Bill."—(*The Chairman of Ways and Means.*)

Ordered, "That this Order be a Standing Order of this House."

Ordered, "That a Private Bill shall, when laid on the Table of the House, be deemed to have been read a first time and ordered to be read a second time, or referred to the Examiners, as the case may be, on the day on which it is so laid, and shall be recorded in the Votes as having been so read."—(*The Chairman of Ways and Means.*)

Ordered, "That this Order be a Standing Order of this House."

Standing Orders 195, 196, and 197 read, and repealed.—(*The Chairman of Ways and Means.*)

Mr. J. W. Lowther... 997

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Standing Order 208A read, and amended, by "adding at end the words 'and may, if they they think fit, divide the Bill into two Bills, dealing with the opposed and unopposed Orders or Certificates respectively and report the same separately.'"—(*The Chairman of Ways and Means.*)

Mr. J. W. Lowther... 997

Standing Order 33 read, and amended "In line 1, by leaving out the word '21st,' and inserting the word '18th.'"

Standing Order 34 read, and amended "In line 1, by leaving out the word '21st,' and inserting the word '18th.'"

Standing Order 63 read, and amended "In lines 4 and 5, by leaving out the words 'after the First Reading thereof be referred,' and inserting the words 'within five weeks of the date on which the Petition for the same was indorsed by the Examiner be referred again.'"

Standing Order 66 read, and amended "In line 1, by inserting after the word 'Bill,' the words 'originating in this House either as.'"

"In line 9, by leaving out the words 'before the Second Reading in this House,' and inserting the words 'within five weeks of the date on which the Petition for the same was indorsed by the Examiner.'"

Standing Order 67 read, and amended, "In line 4, by leaving out the words 'after the First Reading thereof be referred,' and inserting the words 'within five weeks of the date on which the Petition for the same was indorsed by the Examiner be referred again.'"

Standing Order 84 read, and amended, "In line 7, by leaving out the words '33A and 60A,' and inserting the words '34A,' and by leaving out the word '21st,' and inserting the word '18th.'"

Standing Order 92 read, and amended, "In lines 3 and 4, by leaving out the words 'and after the Petition for the Bill shall have been duly presented.'"

Standing Order 104 read, and repealed, Ordered, "That the General Committee on Railway and Canal Bills shall refer every unopposed Railway or Canal Bill to the Committee on Unopposed Bills."

Ordered, "That this Order be a Standing Order of this House."

Standing Order 107 read, and amended, 'In line 2, by leaving out the words 'not later than ten clear days after the First Reading thereof,' and inserting the words 'within the time appointed by Standing Order 129.'"

Standing Order 194B read, and amended, "In line 10, by leaving out the word '21st,' and inserting the word '17th.'"

"In line 17, by leaving out the words 'The Petition for the Bill may be presented forthwith and.'"

"In line 18, by inserting after the word 'shall,' the words 'as soon as may be after the deposit of the Petition.'"

"In lines 18 and 19, by leaving out the words, 'not later than the second sitting day after the presentation of the Petition.'"

Standing Order 210 read, and amended, "In line 2, by leaving out the words, 'Not later than ten clear days after the First Reading of such Bill,' and inserting the words 'Within the required time.'

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Standing Order 230 read, and amended, "In line 3, by leaving out the word, '21st,' and inserting the word, '17th.'"

"In line 11, by leaving out the word, '21st,' and inserting the word, '17th.'"

Table of Fees read, and amended—

"In line 5, by leaving out the words, 'the Petition for.'"

"In line 12, by leaving out the word, 'Petition,' and inserting the word, 'presentation.'"—(*The Chairman of Ways and Means.*)

Standing Orders, as amended, to be printed. [No. 298.]

SUPPLY [20TH ALLOTTED DAY].

Considered in Committee:

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith), in the Chair.]

CLASS V.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £284,780, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1904, for the expenses in connection with His Majesty's Embassies, Missions, and Consular Establishments abroad, and other expenditure chargeable to the Consular Vote."

Mr. Bryce (Aberdeen, S.) ... 1001
Sir Albert Rollit (Islington, S.) ... 1004
Mr. Partington (Derbyshire, High Peak) ... 1007
Sir Howard Vincent (Sheffield, Central) ... 1008
Mr. William Redmond (Clare, E.) ... 1008
The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Lord Cranborne, Rochester) ... 1012

And, it being Midnight, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon Monday next.

Revenue Bill—[SECOND READING].—Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Mr. Dalziel (Kirkcaldy Burghs) ... 1018
Sir Charles Dilke (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean) ... 1020

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day three months.'"—(*Mr. Dalziel.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

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The Financial Secretary to the Treasury (*Mr. Elliot, Durham*) 1021
The Chancellor of the Exchequer (*Mr. Ritchie, Croydon*) 1023
Mr. Lough (*Islington, S.*) 1023
Mr. Alexander Cross (*Glasgow, Camlachie*) 1024

Motion made, and Question—"That the debate be now adjourned."—(*Mr. Caldwell.*)

Put, and agreed to.

Debate to be resumed upon Tuesday next.

Public Works Loans Bill [Second Reading].—Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Mr. Lough 1024
Mr. Elliot 1024
Mr. Whitley 1024
Mr. Dalziel... 1025
Mr. John Dewar (*Inverness*) 1025
Mr. Caldwell 1026
Mr. Weir (*Ross and Cromarty*) 1026
Mr. H. J. Wilson (*Yorkshire W.R., Holmfirth*) 1027

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day three months.'"—(*Mr. H. J. Wilson.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

Mr. Dalziel... 1027
The Lord Advocate (*Mr. A. Graham Murray, Buteshire*) 1027
Mr. Whitley 1027

Question put, and agreed to.

Main Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed for Monday next.

Public Buildings Expenses [Consolidated Fund].—Resolution reported. "That it is expedient to make further provision for defraying the expenses of the purchase of Land and Buildings and the construction of Buildings and Works in connection with certain Public Departments, and to authorise the issue out of the Consolidated Fund of any sums not exceeding in the whole £1,790,000 for such purposes, and to authorise the Treasury to borrow for the purpose of providing money for sums to be issued out of the Consolidated Fund, or for the repayment of sums so issued, by means of Terminable Annuities for such period not exceeding thirty years from the dates of borrowing, such Annuities to be paid out of moneys to be provided by Parliament for the service of the Commissioners of Works, and if those moneys are insufficient out of the Consolidated Fund."

Resolution agreed to.

Bill ordered to be brought in upon the said Resolution by Mr. Elliot, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Mr. Victor Cavendish 1028

Public Buildings Expenses Bill.—"To make further provision for defraying the Expenses of the purchase of Land and Buildings and the construction of Buildings and Works in connection with certain Public Departments," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 305]. 1028

Statute Law Revision (Scotland) Bill [LORDS].—Order for Committee read, and discharged:—Bill withdrawn 1028

Whereupon, in pursuance of the Order of the House of the 28th day of July, Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House without Question put.

Adjourned at Ten minutes after One o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS: FRIDAY, 31st JULY, 1903.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the certificate from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have been complied with: Post Office Sites.

Also a certificate that in the case of the following Bill (referred to them by order of the House of the 14th instant), the provisions of the Bill have been approved of at a meeting of the members of the Clogher Valley Railway Company, held in accordance with the requirements of Standing Order No. 64. Ulster and Connaught Light Railways.

The same were ordered to lie on the Table 1029

Manchester Southern Tramways Bill [H.L.].—Commons' Amendments considered and agreed to 1029

Crystal Palace District Gas Bill.—Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments 1029

Castleblayney, Keady, and Armagh Railway (Extension of Time) Bill.—Read 3ª, and passed 1029

Ebbw Vale Water and Improvement Bill, now Ebbw Vale Improvement Bill; Western Valleys (Monmouthshire) Sewerage Board Bill; Stroud and District Tramways Bill; Erith Tramways and Improvement Bill.—Read 3ª, with the Amendments, and passed, and returned to the Commons ... 1029

North Metropolitan Electric Power Supply Bill [H.L.]; Moved, That Standing Order No. 143a be dispensed with, and that the Bill be now read 3ª; agreed to; Bill read 3ª accordingly, and passed, and sent to the Commons 1029

Chard Corporation Gas and Electricity Bill [H.L.]; Rochester Corporation Tramways and Improvements Bill [H.L.].—Returned from the Commons, agreed to, with Amendments 1029

Gosport and Fareham Tramways Bill [H.L.].—Returned from the Commons, agreed to, with Amendments. The said Amendments considered, and agreed to 1030

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Great Western Railway Bill; Lancashire and Yorkshire and London and North-Western Railways (Steam Vessels) Bill; Neath, Pontardawe, and Brynaman Railway Bill.—Returned from the Commons, with the Amendments agreed to 1030

Tramways Orders Confirmation (No. 1) Bill [H.L.]; Tramways Orders Confirmation (No. 2) Bill [H.L.].—Commons' Amendments to be considered on Monday next 1030

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 5) Bill; Metropolitan Police Provisional Order Bill.—Read 3ª (according to Order), and passed 1030

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

BOARD OF EDUCATION.—General reports of His Majesty's Inspectors on elementary schools and training colleges, for the year 1902 1030

MARRIAGES, BIRTHS, AND DEATHS (IRELAND).—Thirty-ninth annual report of the Registrar-General, for the year 1902 1030

FISHERIES (IRELAND).—Report of the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction for Ireland on the Sea and Inland Fisheries of Ireland, for the year 1902 (Part I., General Report) 1030

QUEEN'S COLLEGE, BELFAST.—Annual Report of the President, for the year 1902–3 1030

INDUSTRIAL ASSOCIATIONS.—Directory of Industrial Associations in the United Kingdom in 1903 1030

LIGHT LOAD LINE, 1903.—Papers showing the action taken by the Board of Trade with regard to certain recommendations made by the Select Committee of the House of Lords on Light Load Line 1030

RAILWAY RETURNS.—Returns of the capital, traffic, receipts, and working expenditure of the Railway Companies of the United Kingdom for the year 1902; with a General Report thereon and Summary Tables for a series of years 1031

NAVY (HEALTH).—Statistical Report of the health of the Navy, for the year 1902 1031

INDIA (RAILWAYS).—Report on the administration and working of Indian Railways, by Thomas Robertson, C.V.O., Special Commissioner for Indian Railways.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table 1031

Naval Prize Money.—Account showing the receipt and expenditure of naval prize, bounty, and salvage, and other moneys between 1st April, 1902, and 31st March, 1903. Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table 1031

THE MILITIA BALLOT.

The Earl of Wemyss 1031
The Lord President of the Council (*The Duke of Devonshire*) 1032

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Militia Ballot Bill [H.L.]—[SECOND READING.]—Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

The Earl of Wemyss 1033

Moved—"That the Bill be now read 2a."—(*The Earl of Wemyss.*)

The Under Secretary of State for War (*The Earl of Hardwicke*) 1036

Motion and Bill, by leave of the House, withdrawn.

MARRIAGE WITH A DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER.

The Duke of Northumberland 1037
The President of the Board of Agriculture (*The Earl of Onslow*) 1038
The Lord Archbishop of Canterbury 1038
The Duke of Northumberland 1039
Lord James of Hereford 1040
The Earl of Onslow 1040

THE DOUAI BENEDICTINES.

Lord Herries 1041
The Earl of Onslow 1044

THE PRICE OF BREAD AND THE CORN DUTY.

The Earl of Camperdown 1046
Earl Spencer 1050
The Earl of Onslow 1051
Lord Tweedmouth 1053

RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION IN BOARD SCHOOLS.

Lord Reay 1054
The Lord Bishop of London 1058
The Lord Bishop of Hereford 1059
The Lord Bishop of Rochester 1060
The President of the Board of Education (*The Marquess of Londonderry*)... 1061

Bills of Exchange Act, 1882, Amendment Bill [H.L.]—[SECOND READING.] —Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

The Lord Chancellor (*The Earl of Halsbury*) 1065

Moved, that the Bill be now read 2a.—(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

On Question, Bill read 2a (according to Order), and committed to a Committee of the whole House on Monday next.

Pistols Bill.—Read 3ª (according to Order), with the Amendments. A further Amendment made; Bill passed, and returned to the Commons 1065

Public Offices (Dublin) Bill.—Read 3ª (according to Order), and passed ... 1065

Military Lands Bill.—Read 3ª (according to Order), with the Amendment, and passed, and returned to the Commons 1065

THE LORD CHANCELLOR AND THE LAW CLERKS.

Lord Monkswell 1065
The Lord Chancellor 1066

House adjourned at five minutes past Seven o'clock, to Monday next, a quarter past Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: FRIDAY, 31st JULY, 1903.

The House met at Twelve of the Clock.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO COMPLIED WITH.—Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, viz: Hastings Harbour Bill [Lords].

Ordered that the Bill be read a second time … … … … … 1066

Carmarthenshire Electric Power Bill [LORDS.]—Lords' reason for disagreeing to one of the Commons' Amendments of the Bill considered:—Resolved, That this House doth not insist on the Amendment to which the Lords have disagreed.—(*The Chairman of Ways and Means*) … … 1067

Bath Corporation Water Bill [LORDS]; Dublin, Wicklow, and Wexford Railway Bill.—Lords' Amendments considered, and agreed to … … 1067

Bristol Corporation Bill [LORDS] (King's Consent signified)—Read the third time, and passed, with Amendments … … … … … 1067

Kip's Patents Bill [LORDS];—Read the third time, and passed, with Amendments … … … … … … … … … 1067

Maryport Harbour Bill [LORDS] (King's Consent signified)—Read the third time, and passed, with Amendments … … … … … … 1067

Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Tramways Bill [LORDS]; West Bromwich Corporation Bill [Lords]—Read the third time, and passed, with Amendments … … … … … … … … 1067

Hove, Worthing, and District Tramways Bill [LORDS], [BY ORDER]; South Eastern and London, Chatham, and Dover Railways Bill [Lords] (by Order)—Read the third time, and passed, with Amendments … … 1067

Irvine and District Water Board Confirmation Bill [LORDS]—Read the third time, and passed, without Amendment … … … … 1067

Wick and Pulteney Harbours Order Confirmation Bill -Read the third time, and passed … … … … … … … … 1067

Gas and Water Orders Confirmation Bill [LORDS]; Education Board Provisional Order Confirmation (London) Bill [Lords]—As amended, considered; to be read the third time upon Monday next … … .. … 1067

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have agreed to, Metropolitan Streets Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 8) Bill, without Amendment.

London County Council (Tramways and Improvements) Bill; London County Council (Money) Bill; South Shields Corporation Bill; Beckenham Urban District Council Bill, with Amendments.

Amendments to, Exeter Corporation Bill [Lords]; Barry Railway Bill [Lords]; Dewsbury, Batley, and Birstal Tramways Bill [Lords]; Worthing Corporation Tramways Bill [Lords], without Amendment.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to continue and amend The Light Railways Act, 1896." (Light Railways Bill) [Lords.]

And also a Bill, intituled, "An Act to empower the Urban District Council of Willesden to sell their generating station at Willesden to the North Metropolitan Electric Power Supply Company; to confer further powers upon that company; and for other purposes." (North Metropolitan Electric Power Supply Bill) [Lords.] 1068

North Metropolitan Electric Power Supply Bill [Lords].—Read the first time, and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills... ... 1068

PETITION.

Licensing (Scotland) Acts Amendment Bill.—Petition from Lerwick, for alteration; to lie upon the Table 1068

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

Board of Education (General Reports).—Copy presented, of General Reports of His Majesty's Inspectors on Elementary Schools and Training Colleges for the year 1902 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1068

Directory of Industrial Associations.—Copy presented, of Directory of Industrial Associations in the United Kingdom in 1903 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1069

Light Load Line.—Copy presented, of Papers showing the action taken by the Board of Trade with regard to certain recommendations made by the Select Committee of the House of Lords on Light Load Line [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1069

Railway Returns.—Copy presented, of Returns of the Capital, Traffic Receipts, and Working Expenditure, etc., of the Railway Companies of the United Kingdom for the year 1902 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1069

British Vessels Sold to Foreigners.—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 22nd July; *Mr. Runciman*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 298] 1069

British Colonies (Duties on Imports).—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 21st July; *Mr. Alfred Davies*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 299.] 1069

Queen's College (Belfast).—Copy presented, of Annual Report of the President for 1902–3 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1069

Marriages, Births, and Deaths (Ireland).—Copy presented, of the thirty-ninth Annual Report of the Registrar-General of Marriages, Births, and Deaths in Ireland, 1902 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1069

Fisheries (Ireland).—Copy presented, of Report of the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction for Ireland on the Sea and Inland Fisheries of Ireland for 1902. Part I. General Report [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1069

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LOCAL TAXATION RETURNS (ENGLAND).—Copy presented, of the Annual Local Taxation Returns for 1901–1902 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 300.] 1070

EAST INDIA (RAILWAYS).—Copy presented, of Report on the administration and working of Indian Railways, by Thomas Robertson, C.V.O., Special Commissioner for Indian Railways [by Command]; to lie upon the Table... 1070

NAVY (HEALTH).—Copy presented, of Statistical Report of the Health of the Navy for the year 1902 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 301.] 1070

NAVAL PRIZE MONEY.—Account presented, showing the Receipt and Expenditure of Naval Prize, Bounty, Salvage and other Moneys between between 1st April, 1902, and 31st March, 1903 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 302.] 1070

TAXES AND IMPOSTS.—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 12th May; *Mr. Goddard*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 303.] ... 1070

PUBLIC WORKS LOANS (REMISSION OF DEBT).—Committee to consider of authorising the Remission of a certain Debt due to the Public Works Loan Commissioners in pursuance of any Act of the present session relating to Local Loans (King's Recommendation signified), upon Monday next.—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer*) 1070

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

EMPLOYMENT OF KAFFIRS ON TRANSVAAL RAILWAYS.—Question, Sir Charles Dilke (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean); Answer, Mr. J. Chamberlain ... 1071

BRITISH EXPORTS TO CANADA.—Question, Mr. Seely (Lincoln); Answer, Mr. J. Chamberlain 1071

STAFF OF ECCLESIASTICAL COMMISSIONERS—SALARIES AND PENSIONS.—Question, Mr. Humphreys-Owen (Montgomeryshire); Answer, Mr. Lees Knowles ... 1071

LEGAL EXPENSES OF ECCLESIASTICAL COMMISSIONERS.—Question, Mr. Humphreys-Owen; Answer, Mr. Lees Knowles 1072

POPULATION OF DIOCESES OF WORCESTER AND BIRMINGHAM.—Question, Mr. Humphreys-Owen; Answer, Mr. Akers Douglas 1073

MARRIAGE WITH A DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER IN BRITISH EAST AFRICA.—Question, Mr. Talbot (Oxford University); Answer, Lord Cranborne ... 1073

TAXATION AND TRADE — UNITED KINGDOM. — Question, Sir John Colomb (Great Yarmouth); Answer, Mr. Ritchie 1074

YIELD OF INCOME TAX.—Question, Sir Edgar Vincent (Exeter); Answer, Mr. Ritchie 1074

COMPARATIVE GROWTH OF PRIVATE WEALTH IN ENGLAND, FRANCE, AND GERMANY.—Question, Sir Edgar Vincent; Answer, Mr. Ritchie 1075

REGISTRATION OF SCHOOL TEACHERS.—Question, Sir Edgar Vincent; Answer, Sir William Anson 1076

AVERAGE PRICES OF WHEAT AT CHICAGO AND BUENOS AYRES.—Question, Colonel Long (Worcestershire, Evesham); Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour ... 1076

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MANUFACTURED ARTICLES EXPORTED FROM UNITED KINGDOM, FRANCE, GERMANY, AND THE UNITED STATES.—Question, Mr. Courtenay Warner (Staffordshire, Lichfield); Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour 1077

IMPORTS OF MANUFACTURED ARTICLES.—Question, Mr. Rea (Gloucester); Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour 1077

IMPORTS OF MANUFACTURED ARTICLES INTO FRANCE, GERMANY, AND UNITED STATES.—Question, Mr. Toulmin (Lancashire, Bury); Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour 1077

ACCOUNTS OF GENERAL LIGHTHOUSE FUND.—Question, Sir Robert Ropner (Stockton); Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour 1078

EDUCATION ACT, 1902—ISSUE OF REGULATIONS UNDER SECTION 23 (4).—Question, Sir Charles Dilke; Answer Mr. Walter Long 1078

RATEABLE VALUE OF ENGLAND AND WALES.—Question, Mr. Humphreys-Owen; Answer, Mr. Walter Long 1078

WORSTED TRADE—ACCIDENTS FROM FLYING SHUTTLES.—Question, Sir Charles Dilke; Answer, Mr. Akers Douglas 1079

SALE OF ADDINGTON PARK.—Question, Mr. Moon (St. Pancras, N.); Answer, Mr. Lees Knowles 1079

PACE OF MOTOR MAILS.—Question, Mr. Cathcart Wason (Orkney and Shetland); Answer, Mr. Austen Chamberlain 1080

INCREMENTS FOR POSTAL KNOWLEDGE—CASE OF TELEGRAPHIST AT SHREWSBURY.—Question, Mr. Schwann (Manchester, N.); Answer, Mr. Austen Chamberlain 1080

SPIDDAL (CONNEMARA) PETTY SESSIONS—ATTENDANCE OF MAGISTRATES.—Question, Mr. O'Malley (Galway, Connemara); Answer, Mr. Wyndham ... 1080

CASE OF ELLEN MADIGAN.—Question, Mr. William Redmond (Clare, E.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1081

BELTURBET URBAN COUNCIL—SURCHARGE OF RENT COLLECTOR THOMAS DOLAN.—Question, Mr. J. P. Farrell (Longford, N.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1081

INCREASE OF POLICE FORCE AT LEIXLIP.—Question, Mr. Leamy (Kildare, N.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1082

AREA OF GROUND AND DURATION OF SEPTEMBER MANŒUVRES.—Question, Mr. Charles Hobhouse (Bristol, E.); Answer, Mr. Brodrick 1082

COTTON TRADE AND FISCAL REFORM.—Question, Sir Wm. Holland (Yorkshire, West Riding, Rotherham); Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 1083

TRANSFER OF CROWN LAND TO LORD PENRHYN.—Question, Mr. Levy (Leicestershire, Loughborough); Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 1083

Irish Development Grant Bill.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith) in the Chair.]

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Clause 1—

Amendment proposed—

"In page 1, line 5, to leave out from the words 'shall be,' to end of line 6, and insert the words 'paid out of money to be provided by Parliament.'"—(*Mr. Wyndham.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the clause."

Mr. Gibson Bowles (Lynn Regis) 1084
The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. Wyndham, Dover) 1085
Mr. William Redmond (Clare, E.) 1085
Mr. T. W. Russell (Tyrone, S.) 1086
Sir Brampton Gurdon (Norfolk, N.) 1086
The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Ritchie, Croydon) 1086

Question put and negatived.

Question, "That those words be there inserted in the clause," put, and agreed to.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 1, line 12, after the word 'shall,' to insert the words 'subject to the provisions of any Act of the present session relating to Irish land purchase.'"—(*Mr. Wyndham.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. Kilbride (Kildare, S.) 1087
Mr. Caldwell (Lanarkshire, Mid) 1087
Sir M. Hicks Beach (Bristol, W.) 1088
Mr. Wyndham 1090
Mr. Wm. Redmond 1092

Question put, and agreed to.

Mr. Delany (Queen's County, Ossory) 1093

Amendment proposed—

"After the word 'Development' to insert the words 'Arterial Drainage.'"—(*Mr. Delany.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be inserted in the Bill."

Mr. Wyndham 1093
Mr. Leamy (Kildare, N.) 1094
Mr. T. W. Russell 1094
Col. Saunderson (Armagh, N.) 1094
Mr. Wyndham 1094

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Mr. Gibson Bowles 1095

Amendment proposed—

"In line 23, to leave out the word 'Treasury' and insert the words 'Public Accounts Committee of the House of Commons.'"—(*Mr. Gibson Bowles.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'Treasury' stand part of the clause."

Mr. Wyndham 1095
Mr. Edmund Robertson (Dundee) 1096
Mr. Wyndham 1097
Mr. Gibson Bowles... 1098

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 1, line 26, to leave out Sub-section (4) and insert the words '(4) Any estimate presented in respect of the grant payable in any financial year shall show the amount of the estimated balance to the credit of the Ireland Development Grant Account at the beginning of the financial year, and also the proposed application of the sums to be issued out of the account in the financial year.'"—(*Mr. Wyndham.*)

Amendment agreed to.

Mr. Caldwell 1098
Mr. Wyndham 1099
Mr. Flynn (Cork County, N.) 1099

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 2 agreed to.

Bill, as amended, to be considered upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 306.]

Military Works Bill.

(Considered in Committee.)

(In the Committee).

[MR. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith) in the chair.]

Clause 1.

Mr. Lough (Islington, W.)... 1100

Amendment proposed—

"In page 1, line 10, to leave out the words from the word 'Act,' to end of Sub-section (1)."—(*Mr. Lough.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the clause."

Sir Arthur Hayter (Walsall) 1101
The Financial Secretary to the War Office (Lord Stanley, Lancashire, Westhoughton)... 1101
Mr. Buchanan (Perthshire, E.) 1101
The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Brodrick, Surrey, Guildford) ... 1102
Col. Nolan (Galway, N.) 1102
Mr. Lough 1103
Mr. Brodrick 1103
Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman (Stirling Burghs) 1104
Mr. Courtenay Warner (Staffordshire, Lichfield) 1105

Question put.

The Committee divided: Ayes, 109; Noes, 39. (Division List No. 201.)

Mr. Lough 1107

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Amendment proposed—

"In page 1, line 20, to leave out the words from the word 'Act' to end of Sub-section (2)."—(*Mr. Lough.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out, to the end of line 22, stand part of the clause."

Mr. Brodrick 1108
Mr. Buchanan 1108
Mr. Courtenay Warner 1109
Mr. Gibson Bowles (*Lynn Regis*) 1109
Mr. Caldwell (*Lanarkshire, Mid*) 1110

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 118; Noes, 51. (Division List No. 202.)

Mr. Buchanan 1111

Amendment proposed—

"In page 1, line 23, leave out the words 'dates of borrowing,' and insert the words 'passing of this Act.'"—(*Mr. Buchanan.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the clause."

Mr. Brodrick 1113
Mr. Gibson Bowles 1113
Sir William Harcourt (*Monmouthshire, W.*) 1115
The Chancellor of the Exchequer (*Mr. Ritchie, Croydon*) 1115
Mr. Edmund Robertson (*Dundee*) 1116
Mr. Ritchie... 1117
Mr. Buchanan 1117
Mr. Gibson Bowles 1118
Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman 1118
Mr. Courtenay Warner 1119
Sir John Gorst (*Cambridge University*) 1119
Mr. Weir (*Ross and Cromarty*) 1120

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 142; Noes, 63. (Division List No. 203.)

Mr. Buchanan 1121

Amendment proposed—

"In page 1, line 27, to leave out Sub-section (4)."—(*Mr. Buchanan.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the clause."

Mr. Brodrick 1124
Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman 1125
Mr. Lough 1125
Mr. Edmund Robertson 1126
Mr. Weir 1126
Sir John Gorst 1127
Mr. Buchanan 1127
Sir Henry Fowler (*Wolverhampton, E.*) 1127
Mr. Gibson Bowles... 1129

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 154; Noes, 60. (Division List No. 204.)

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Clause 1 agreed to.

Schedule.

Sir John Colomb 1133

Amendment proposed—

"In page 2, line 9, to leave out the figures £594,000"—(*Sir John Colomb.*)

Amendment negatived.

Bill reported, without Amendment; to be read the third time upon Monday next.

Naval Works Bill.—(Considered in Committee.)

(In the Committee.)

[Sir FREDERICK BANBURY (Camberwell, Peckham) in the Chair.]

1. Schedule—

Mr. Gibson Bowles (*Lynn Regis*) 1137
Mr. Caldwell (*Lanarkshire, Mid*) 1137
Mr. Courtenay Warner (*Staffordshire, Lichfield*) 1139
Mr. Lough (*Islington, W.*) 1139

Bill reported, without Amendment; to be read the third time upon Monday next.

South African Loans Bill.—(Considered in Committee.)

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith) in the Chair.]

Sir Arthur Hayter (*Walsall*) 1141
Sir Charles Dilke (*Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean*) 1141
The Chancellor of the Exchequer (*Mr. Ritchie, Croydon*) 1141

Bill reported, without Amendment; to be read the third time upon Monday next.

Employment of Children Bill.—As Amended (by the Standing Committee) further considered.

Mr. Courtenay Warner (*Staffordshire, Lichfield*) 1142

Amendment proposed to the Bill—

"In page 5, line 13, after the words 'nineteen hundred and one' to insert the words 'or any subsequent census.'"—(*Mr. Courtenay Warner.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted in the Bill."

The Under Secretary of State for the Home Department (*Mr. Cochrane, Ayrshire, N.*) 1142

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Amendment proposed to the Bill—

"In page 5, line 24, to leave out Sub-section (1)."—(*Mr. Scott Dickson.*)

Amendment agreed to.

Mr. Courtenay Warner 1143

Amendment proposed to the Bill—

> "In page 5, line 34, after the word 'mean' to insert the words 'in the case of a school board with a population, according to the census of nineteen hundred and one, of over ten thousand the school board.'"—(*Mr. Courtenay Warner.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted in the Bill."

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Amendment proposed to the Bill—

> "In page 6, line 28, to leave out the words 'general purposes rate,' and insert the words 'public health general assessment leviable within the county or a district of the county, provided that in any Royal, Parliamentary, or police burgh having, according to the census of nineteen hundred and one, a population of less than seven thousand, a proportion of such expenses corresponding to the valuation of such burgh shall be paid to the County Council out of the public health general assessment leviable in such burgh, in compliance with a requisition to that effect to be sent to the town council of such burgh annually not later than the month of October in each year.'"—(*Sir Charles Renshaw.*)

Amendment agreed to.

Amendment proposed to the Bill—

> "In page 6, line 30, to leave out from the word 'assessment,' to the word 'and,' in line 33."—(*Sir Charles Renshaw.*)

Amendment agreed to.

Amendments proposed to the Bill—

> "In page 7, line 1, to leave out sub-section (3), and insert the words—The expression 'local authority' means in the case of an urban district with a population according to the census of nineteen hundred and one of over five thousand, the District Council and elsewhere the County Council."
>
> "In page 7, line 4, after the word 'Proceedings' to insert the words 'under this Act.'"
>
> "In page 7, line 5, to leave out the words 'Corporation or County Council,' and insert the words 'local authority.'"
>
> "In page 7, line 6, to leave out the word 'the' and insert the word 'a.'"
>
> "In page 7, line 8, to leave out the words 'and costs to be.'"
>
> "In page 7, line 8, after the word 'incurred' to insert the words 'by a local authority.'"
>
> "In page 7, line 9, to leave out from the word 'defrayed' to end of clause, and insert the words 'in the case of the Council of a County Borough or of a District Council out of any rate or fund applicable to the purposes of the Public Health (Ireland) Act, 1878, and in the case of a County Council out of the county fund, and in such case the amount required therefor may be raised by means of the poor rate equally over so much of the county as does not comprise any urban district the council whereof is constituted a local authority under this Act.'"—(*Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland.*)

Amendments agreed to.

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The Secretary of State for the Home Department (*Mr. Akers Douglas, Kent, St. Augustine's*) 1144
Mr. Lough (*Islington, W.*)... 1144

Bill read the third time, and passed.

Patriotic Fund Bill.

(Considered in Committee.)

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith) in the Chair.]

Mr. Lough 1145

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. Lough.*)

Mr. Ritchie... 1145
Mr. Edmund Robertson 1145
Sir Charles Dilke 1146
Mr. Dalziel (*Kirkcaldy Burghs*) 1146

Question put, and negatived.

Clause 1 agreed to.

Clause 2.

The Civil Lord of the Admiralty (*Mr. Pretyman, Suffolk, Woodbridge*) ... 1146
Sir Arthur Hayter 1146

Amendment proposed—
"In page 1, to leave out line 16."—(*Mr. Pretyman.*)

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 2, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 3.

Mr. Pretyman 1146

Amendment proposed—
"In page 1, line 20, to leave out the word 'permanent.'"—(*Mr. Pretyman.*)

Sir Arthur Hayter... 1147

Amendment agreed to.

Mr. Hayes Fisher 1147

Amendment proposed—
"In page 1, line 22, after the word 'that' to insert the words 'the legal position and rights of.'"—(*Mr. Hayes Fisher.*)

Mr. Pretyman 1147

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Clause 3, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 4 and 5 agreed to.

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Page

Schedule :—

Motion made, and Question proposed—"That the Chairman do report Progress; and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. Courtenay Warner.*)

Sir Charles Dilke 1148

Question put, and agreed to.

Committee Report Progress; to sit again upon Monday next.

SUGAR CONVENTION [EXPENSES AND DUTIES].

(Considered in Committee).

(In the Committee).

[MR. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith) in the Chair.]

Motion made and Question proposed, "That it is expedient to authorise the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of a share of the expenses of the Permanent Commission and of any Expenses in connection with the attendance of delegates at the Commission, which may be payable under any Act of the present session to make provision for giving effect to a Convention signed the 5th day of March, 1902, in relation to sugar. That the duties payable under Section 2 of The Finance Act, 1901, or any Act amending the same, shall be taken on the delivery of any article from any factory or refinery, which in pursuance of any Act of the present session is made subject to the supervision of the Commissioners of Customs or Commissioners of Inland Revenue, and shall be the same as those payable on the like articles of importation."—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

Mr. Lough 1149
Mr. Dalziel 1150

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 89; Noes, 29. (Division List No. 205).

Resolved, That it is expedient to authorise the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of a share of the expenses of the Permanent Commission and of any expenses in connection with the attendance of delegates at the Commission, which may be payable under any Act of the present session to make provision for giving effect to a Convention signed the 5th day of March, 1902, in relation to Sugar. That the duties payable under section 2 of The Finance Act, 1901, or any Act amending the same, shall be taken on the delivery of any article from any factory or refinery, which in pursuance of any Act of the present session is made subject to the supervision of the Commissioners of Customs or Commissioners of Inland Revenue, and shall be the same as those payable on the like articles on importation.

Resolution to be reported upon Monday next.

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE.—Fourth Report brought up, and read.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No 304.]

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE.—Fifth Report, with Minutes of Evidence, brought up, and read.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 305.] 1152

Patent Office Extension Bill. Ordered, That Sir Joseph Lawrence and Mr. Courtenay Warner be discharged, and that Sir William Rattigan and Mr. Luke White be added to the Committee.—(*Sir A. Acland-Hood.*)

Whereupon, in pursuance of the Order of the House of the 28th day of July, Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House without Question put.

Adjourned at twenty minutes after Seven o'clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS: MONDAY, 3RD AUGUST, 1903.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Chard Corporation Gas and Electricity Bill [H.L.]; Rochester Corporation Tramways and Improvements Bill [H.L.]. Commons' Amendments considered, and agreed to 1153

Strabane and Letterkenny Railway Bill, now Strabane, Raphoe, and Convoy Railway Bill.—Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments 1153

Great Central Railway Bill; Gateshead Corporation Bill; South Yorkshire Joint Railways Bill; North Eastern Railway Bill; Sheffield Corporation Bill; Cork Harbour Bill. Read 3ª, with the Amendments, and passed, and returned to the Commons... 1153

Employment of Children Bill; Wick and Pulteney Harbours Order Confirmation Bill. Brought from the Commons 1153

Irvine and District Water Board Order Confirmation Bill [H.L.]; Kip's Patents Bill [H.L.]. Returned from the Commons agreed to 1153

Education Board Provisional Order Confirmation (London) Bill [H.L.]; Gas and Water Orders Confirmation Bill [H.L.]. Returned from the Commons agreed to, with Amendments: The said Amendments to be considered To-morrow 1153

Bristol Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Maryport Harbour Bill [H.L.]; Manchester Corporation Bill [H.L.] Returned from the Commons agreed to, with Amendments 1153

Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Tramways Bill [H.L.]; West Bromwich Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Hove, Worthing, and District Tramways Bill [H.L.]; South Eastern and London, Chatham, and Dover Railways Bill [H.L.]; Scottish Ontario and Manitoba Land Company Bill [H.L.]. Returned from the Commons agreed to, with Amendments: The said Amendments considered, and agreed to 1153

Bath Corporation Water Bill; Dublin, Wicklow, and Wexford Railway Bill. Returned from the Commons, with the Amendments agreed to ... 1154

Bournemouth Gas and Water Bill [H.L.]. Returned from the Commons agreed to, with an Amendment: The said Amendment considered and agreed to 1154

Carmarthenshire Electric Power Bill [H.L.] Returned from the Commons with the Amendment to which the Lords have disagreed, not insisted on... 1154

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Wick and Pulteney Harbours Order Confirmation Bill. Read 1ª; to be printed, and (pursuant to the Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899) deemed to have been read 2ª (The Lord Balfour); and reported from the Committee; and to be read 3ª on Thursday next. (No. 185) 1154

Tramways Orders Confirmation (No. 1) Bill [H.L.]; Tramways Orders Confirmation (No. 2) Bill [H.L.]. Commons' Amendments considered (according to Order), and agreed to 1154

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

LOCAL GOVERMENT BOARD (THIRTY-FIRST ANNUAL REPORT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD, 1901–1902).—Supplement in continuation of the Report of the Medical Officer for 1901–1902 on Lead Poisoning and Water Supplies. Volume II. 1154

CUNARD STEAMSHIP COMPANY, LIMITED. -Agreement dated 30th July, 1903, between the Admiralty, the Board of Trade, and the Postmaster-General of the one part, and the Cunard Steamship Company, Limited, of the other part, and Treasury Minute thereon, dated 31st July, 1903, together with the said Company's memorandum and articles of association, and of a draft trust deed for securing debenture stock:

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table 1154

Employment of Children Bill.—Read 1ª; to be printed; and to be read 2ª To-morrow—(*The Lord Belper.*) (No. 184.) 1154

Irish Land Bill [SECOND READING].—Order of the day for the Second Reading read.

The Lord President of the Council (*The Duke of Devonshire*) 1155

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2a."—(*The Duke of Devonshire.*)

The Duke of Abercorn 1168
The Earl of Crewe 1172
The Earl of Dunraven 1183
The Earl of Lytton 1195
Lord Oranmore and Browne 1201
The Earl of Belmore 1203
The Earl of Donoughmore 1206
Lord Emly... 1210
The Earl of Westmeath 1218
Viscount Hampden 1225
Lord Inchiquin 1232
The President of the Board of Education (*The Marquess of Londonderry*) 1233
Lord Clonbrock 1242
Lord Castletown 1246
Earl Spencer 1251
The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (*The Marquess of Lansdowne*) 1262
Lord Kilmaine 1268

On Question, that the Bill be read a second time,

Agreed to.

Bill read 2ª accordingly, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Thursday next.

Bills of Exchange Act, 1882, Amendment Bill [H.L.].—House in Committee (according to Order); Bill reported without Amendment; Standing Committee negatived; and Bill to be read 3ª to-morrow 1269

House adjourned at a quarter past Twelve o'clock a.m. till a quarter past Four o'clock p.m.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.—MONDAY, 3RD AUGUST, 1903.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS.—The Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of the Chairman of Ways and Means ... 1270

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO COMPLIED WITH).—MR. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, viz.:—North Metropolitan Electric Power Supply Bill [Lords].
Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time 1270

Bournemouth Gas and Water Bill [LORDS].—Read the third time, and passed, with an Amendment 1270

Manchester Corporation Bill [LORDS]; Scottish Ontario and Manitoba Land Company Bill [Lords].—Read the third time, and passed, with Amendments 1270

Brighton Corporation Bill [LORDS].—As amended, considered; Amendments made; Bill to be read the third time... 1270

Hastings Harbour District Railway Bill [LORDS]; Liverpool University Bill [Lords].—As amended, considered; to be read the third time ... 1271

Preston, Chorley, and Horwich Tramways Bill [LORDS].—As amended, considered; an Amendment made; Bill to be read the third time ... 1271

South Staffordshire Tramways Bill [LORDS].—As amended, considered; to be read the third time 1271

Education Board Provisional Order Confirmation (London) Bill [LORDS]; Gas and Water Orders Confirmation Bill [Lords].—Read the third time, and passed with Amendments... 1271

AIRDRIE AND COATBRIDGE TRAMWAYS ORDER CONFIRMATION.—Bill to confirm a Provisional Order under The Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, relating to Airdrie and Coatbridge Tramways, ordered to be brought in by the Lord Advocate and Mr. Solicitor-General for Scotland.

Airdrie and Coatbridge Tramways Order Confirmation Bill.—"To confirm a Provisional Order under The Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, relating to Airdrie and Coatbridge Tramways." Presented accordingly; and ordered to be considered to-morrow 1271

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Lerwick Harbour Improvements Act (1877) Amendment Order Confirmation.—Bill to confirm a Provisional Order under The Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, relating to Lerwick Harbour, ordered to be brought in by the Lord Advocate and Mr. Solicitor-General for Scotland.

Lerwick Harbour Improvements Act (1877) Amendment Order Confirmation Bill.—"To confirm a provisional Order under The Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, relating to Lerwick Harbour." Presented accordingly; and ordered to be considered to-morrow 1271

Message from the Lords.

That they have agreed to—Public Offices (Dublin) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 5) Bill; Metropolitan Police Provisional Order Bill; Castleblaney, Keady, and Armagh Railway (Extension of Time) Bill, without Amendment.

Military Lands Bill, with an Amendment.

Pistols Bill; Ebbw Vale Water and Improvement Bill—now Ebbw Vale Improvement Bill; Western Valleys (Monmouthshire) Sewerage Board Bill; Stroud and District Tramways Bill; Erith Tramways and Improvement Bill, with Amendments.

Amendments to—Manchester Southern Tramways Bill [Lords]; Gosport and Fareham Tramways Bill [Lords], without Amendment 1271

PETITIONS.

Congested Districts (Scotland) (No. 2) Bill.—Petition from Stornoway, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1272

Sale of Intoxicating Liquors on Sunday Bill.—Petition from Farringdon, in favour; to lie upon the Table 1272

Ship Canal between the Firths of Forth and Clyde.—Petition from Alloa, in favour of construction; to lie upon the Table 1272

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

Revenue Bill.—Copy ordered "of Memorandum Explanatory of the Revenue Bill."—(*Mr. Elliot.*)

Copy presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 307] 1272

Cunard Steamship Company, Limited.—Copy presented, of an Agreement, dated 30th July, 1903, between the Admiralty, the Board of Trade, and the Postmaster-General, of the one part, and the Cunard Steamship Company, Limited, of the other part, with Copy of Treasury Minute thereon, dated 31st July, 1903, and Copies of the said Company's Memorandum and Articles of Association and of a draft Trust deed for securing Debenture Stock [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1272

Canada (Preferential Tariff for Goods for the United Kingdom).—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 29th July; *Mr. Alfred Davies*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 310.] 1273

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD —Copy presented, of Supplement to the Thirty-first Annual Report of the Local Government Board, 1901–2, in continuation of the Report of the Medical Officer for 1901–2, on Lead Poisoning and Water Supplies, Vol. II. [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1273

GREENWICH HOSPITAL AND TRAVERS' FOUNDATION.—Copy presented, of Statement of the estimated Income and Expenditure of Greenwich Hospital and of Travers' Foundation for the year 1903–4 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 311] 1273

PUBLIC WORKS LOANS BILL.—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 29th July; *Mr. Elliot*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 309.]... 1273

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

YEOMANRY TRAINING ON CHOBHAM COMMON.—Question, Mr. Remnant (Finsbury, Holborn); Answer, Mr. Brodrick 1273

CONSTRUCTION OF RACKWICK ROAD WALLS, ORKNEY.—Question, Mr. Cathcart Wason (Orkney and Shetland); Answer, Mr. A. Graham Murray... ... 1273

CONSTRUCTION OF CAUSEWAY AT LONGHOPE, ORKNEY.—Question, Mr. Cathcart Wason; Answer, A. Graham Murray... 1274

INCREMENT OF TELEGRAPHISTS FOR POSTAL KNOWLEDGE—CASE AT SHREWSBURY.—Question, Mr. Nannetti (Dublin, College Green); Answer, Mr. Austen Chamberlain 1275

SEA SORTING POST OFFICES ON CUNARD LINERS.—Question, Mr. Alfred Davies (Carmarthen, Boroughs); Answer, Mr. Austen Chamberlain 1275

PUBLICATION OF REGISTRAR-GENERAL'S REPORT AND SUPPLEMENT TO ANNUAL REPORT OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD.—Question, Mr. D. A. Thomas (Merthyr Tydvil); Answer, Mr. Walter Long 1275

INDIAN COMMERCIAL RELATIONS WITH TIBET.—Question, Mr. Dillon (Mayo, E.); Answer, Lord George Hamilton 1276

IRISH EDUCATION—FEES FOR TEACHING IRISH.—Question, Mr. J. F. X. O'Brien (Cork); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1277

PERSONS IN RECEIPT OF RELIEF RETURN.—Question, Mr. O'Shee (Waterford, W.) Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1277

REVISION COURT AT DALKEY.—Question, Mr. Field (Dublin, St. Patrick); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1278

HEALTH OF JOHN M'ELLIGOTT—A PRISONER IN DUNDALK GOAL.—Question, Mr. Dillon; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1278

SUGGESTED STEAMER SERVICE BETWEEN SLIGO AND GALWAY.—Question, Dr. Ambrose (Mayo, W.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1279

MILITARY BOOKS FOR OFFICERS' MESSES.—Question, Col. Wyndham (Bath); Answer, Mr. J. Chamberlain 1280

IMMIGRANTS INTO CANADA.—Question, Mr. D. A. Thomas; Answer, Mr. J. Chamberlain 1280

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INCREASE OF POPULATION OF CANADA.—Mr. D. A. Thomas; Answer, Mr. J. Chamberlain 1281

DECREASE OF BIRTH RATE IN AUSTRALIA.—Question, Mr. D. A. Thomas; Answer, Mr. J. Chamberlain 1281

IMPORTS INTO CANADA.—Question, Sir Wm. Harcourt; Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour 1282

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

SOMALI OPERATIONS—STOPPING POWER OF BULLETS.—Question, Mr. Arthur Lee (Hampshire, Fareham); Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Brodrick, Surrey, Guildford) 1283

CANADA AND IRISH HOME RULE.—Question, Mr. Joseph Devlin (Kilkenny, N.); Answer, The Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. J. Chamberlain, Birmingham, W.) 1283

KOBÉ CONSULAR REPORT.—Question, Mr. Weir (Ross, Cromarty); Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Lord Cranborne, Rochester) 1284

UNITED STATES SUGAR.—Question, Mr. Lough (Islington, W.); Answer, Lord Cranborne 1284

SOUDAN CIVIL SERVICE.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Lord Cranborne ... 1284

AMERICAN SHOE TRADE.—Question, Mr. Levy (Leicestershire, Loughborough); Answer, The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Gerald Balfour, Leeds, Central).... 1285

STORNOWAY FISHERMEN'S DWELLINGS.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, The Solicitor-General for Scotland (Mr. Scott Dickson, Glasgow, Bridgton) ... 1285

SOUTH UIST CROFTERS.—Question, Mr. John Dewar (Inverness); Answer, Mr. Scott Dickson 1286

WESTMINSTER ABBEY—Question, Mr. Channing (Northamptonshire, E.); Answer, Mr. Victor Cavendish (Derbyshire, W.) 1286

DUBLIN GOLF CLUB.—Question, Mr. Delany (Queen's County, Ossory); Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. Wyndham, Dover) 1287

BALLINCOLLIG ROYAL POWDER MILLS, CORK.—Question, Mr. Sheehan (Cork, County, Mid.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1287

IRISH NATIONAL SCHOOL TEACHERS.—Question, Mr. Flynn (Cork, County, N.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1288

IRISH HOUSING QUESTION.—Questions, Mr. Nannetti (Dublin, College Green); Answers, Mr. Wyndham 1288

SLIGO AND THE CONGESTED DISTRICTS BOARD.—Question, Mr. Patrick O'Brien (Kilkenny); Answer, Mr. Wyndham... 1289

SLIGO CONSTABULARY OFFICE.—Question, Mr. Patrick O'Brien; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1289

ENNISKILLEN PRISON. Question, Mr. Edward Mitchell (Fermanagh, N.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1290

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LISMORE RURAL COUNCIL AND THE CRIMES ACT.—Question, Mr. O'Shea; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1290

LLOYD APJOHN PROPERTY, COUNTY LIMERICK.—Questions, Mr. Lundon (Limerick, E.) and Mr. Kilbride (Kildare, S.); Answers, Mr. Wyndham ... 1290

POLICEMEN AS CLERKS OF PETTY SESSIONS.—Question, Mr. MacVeagh (Down, S.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1291

IRISH DEVELOPMENT GRANT.—Questions, Mr. Murphy (Kerry, E.) and Mr. Wm. Redmond (Clare, E.); Answers, Mr. Wyndham 1292

IRISH INDUSTRIAL INQUIRY.—Question, Dr. Ambrose (Mayo, W.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1292

QUEEN'S COUNTY JURY PANEL.—Question, Mr. MacVeagh; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1293

CROFTER'S HOLDINGS (SCOTLAND) ACT (1886) AMENDMENT BILL.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.) 1293

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.—Questions, Sir. H. Campbell-Bannerman (Stirling Burghs), Mr. Buchanan (Perthshire, E.) and Mr. Flynn; Answers, Mr. A. J. Balfour 1294

Patent Office (Extension) Bill.—Reported from the Select Committee with Minutes of Evidence. Minutes of Proceedings to be printed. [No. 308.] Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 308.] Bill, as amended, re-committed to a Committee of the Whole House for to-morrow, and to be printed. [Bill 308.] 1294

Light Railways Bill [LORDS].—Read the first time; to be read a second time to-morrow, and to be printed. [Bill 309.] 1294

NEW BILL.

Liquor Sellers' Liability Bill.—"To provide for the payment of Compensation by sellers of liquor in certain cases," presented by Sir Wilfrid Lawson, supported by Mr. T. W. Russell; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 310.] 1294

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE—SUPPLY. Ordered, That the Civil Service Supplementary Estimates, 1903–4 (New Services), and Army Excess Vote, 1901–2, may be considered in Committee of Supply at this evening's Sitting after midnight.—(*Mr. A. J. Balfour.*) 1295

SUPPLY [21ST ALLOTTED DAY.]

(Considered in Committee.)

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. JEFFREYS (Hampshire, N.) in the Chair.]

ARMY ESTIMATES, 1903–4.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £6,895,000, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the charge for provisions, forage, and other supplies, including South African compensation claims, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1904."

Colonel Legge (*St. George's, Hanover Square*) ... 1295

Motion made and Question proposed, "That Item A (Cost of Provisions) be reduced by £100."—(*Colonel Legge.*)

Sir Charles Dilke (*Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean*) ... 1296
Mr. Arthur Lee (*Hampshire, Fareham*) ... 1297
Mr. William Redmond (*Clare, E.*) ... 1297
Colonel Blundell (*Lancashire, Ince*) ... 1298
The Financial Secretary to the War Office (*Lord Stanley, Lancashire, Westhoughton*) ... 1298
Mr. William Redmond ... 1302
Mr. Malcolm (*Suffolk, Stowmarket*) ... 1304
Colonel Legge ... 1305
Mr. Maconochie (*Aberdeenshire, E.*) ... 1305
Lord Stanley ... 1305
Mr. William Redmond ... 1309
Sir Charles Dilke ... 1310
Mr. Brodrick ... 1310
Colonel Legge ... 1312

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 44; Noes, 110. (Division List No. 206.)

Original Question again proposed.

Sir Arthur Hayter (*Walsall*) ... 1313
Lord Stanley ... 1313
Mr. Buchanan (*Perthshire, E.*) ... 1314
Mr. Lough (*Islington, W.*) ... 1314
Lord Stanley ... 1315

Question put, and agreed to.

2. £907,000, Militia; Pay, Bounty, etc.

Mr. Yerburgh ... 1316
Colonel Sandys (*Lancashire, Bootle*) ... 1317
The Secretary of State for War (*Mr. Brodrick, Surrey, Guildford*) ... 1317
Sir Arthur Hayter ... 1320
Mr. Reginald Lucas (*Portsmouth*) ... 1322
Sir J. Fergusson (*Manchester, N.E.*) ... 1323
Sir Charles Dilke ... 1325
Mr Walter Palmer (*Salisbury*) ... 1325
Mr. Fuller (*Wiltshire, Westbury*) ... 1326
Mr. Brodrick ... 1326

Vote agreed to.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £480,000, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the charge for the pay and allowances of the Imperial Yeomanry, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1904."

Sir Arthur Hayter ... 1329

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum not exceeding £479,900 be granted for the said Service."—(*Colonel Legge.*)

Lord Stanley 1332
Sir Charles Dilke 1334
Mr. Guest (Plymouth) 1334
Hon. W. F. D. Smith (Strand, Westminster) 1337
Colonel Nolan (Galway N.) 1337
Sir Elliott Lees (Birkenhead) 1337
Mr. Peel (Manchester, S.) 1340
Mr. Brodrick 1342
Major Jameson (Clare, W.) 1343

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Original Question put, and agreed to.

£1,280,000, Volunteer Corps, Pay and Allowances.

Mr. C. R. Spencer (Northamptonshire, Mid) 1344
Mr. Seymour Ormsby-Gore (Lincolnshire, Gainsborough)... 1345
Mr. Wylie (Dumbartonshire) 1347
Mr. Brodrick 1349
Mr. Malcolm 1352
Mr. Brodrick 1352

Vote agreed to.

Resolutions to be reported.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £530,000, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the charge for the pay, etc., of the medical establishment, and for medicines, etc., which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1904."

Mr. Burdett-Coutts (Westminster) 1352

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Resolutions to be reported To-morrow; Committee also report Progress; to sit again this evening.

EVENING SITTING.

SUPPLY [21ST ALLOTTED DAY.]

(Considered in Committee.)

(In the Committee).

[Mr. JEFFREYS (Hampshire, N.) in the Chair.]

ARMY ESTIMATES, 1903-4.—£530,000, Medical Establishment, Pay, etc.

Mr. Burdett-Coutts 1354
Mr. Brodrick 1361
Mr. Weir (Ross and Cromarty) 1363
Colonel Sandys 1364
Mr. Buchanan 1364
Mr. Whitley (Halifax) 1365

Vote agreed to.

2. £1,838,000, Transports and Remounts.

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Sir Charles Dilke 1365
Mr. Brodrick 1366
Major Seely (Isle of Wight) 1366
Mr. Caldwell (Lanarkshire, Mid.) 1367
The Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Arnold-Forster, Belfast, W.) ... 1367
Mr. Buchanan 1368
Mr. Whitley 1369
Mr. Lough 1369
Mr. Brodrick 1369
Mr. Weir 1370
Mr. Caldwell 1371

Vote agreed to.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £1,822,000, be granted to his Majesty, to defray the Charge for Clothing Establishments and Services, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1904."

Sir Charles Dilke 1371
Mr. Crooks (Woolwich) 1371

Motion made, and Question put, "That a sum not exceeding £1,821,900 be granted for the said Service."—(*Mr. Crooks.*)

Sir Fortescue Flannery 1373
Mr. Brodrick 1373
Mr. Kearley (Devonport) 1373
Mr. Shackleton (Lancashire, Clitheroe) 1374
Mr. Reginald Lucas 1375
Mr. Arnold-Forster 1375
Sir John Gorst (Cambridge University) 1376
Mr. Herbert Samuel (Yorkshire, Cleveland) 1376
Colonel Sandys 1377
Mr. Emmott (Oldham) 1377
Mr. Dalziel (Kirkcaldy Burghs) 1378
Sir J. Fergusson 1379
Sir Charles Dilke 1380
Mr. Broadhurst 1380
Mr. Herbert Samuel 1381
Colonel Lockwood (Essex, Epping) 1381
Mr. Kearley 1382
Mr. Dalziel 1382
Mr. Priestley (Granthan) 1382
Mr. Pierpoint (Warrington) 1383
Mr. Cremer (Shoreditch, Haggerston) 1383
Mr. Lyttelton (Warwick and Leamington) 1384
Mr. Brodrick 1385
Mr. Shackleton 1386
Mr. Duke (Plymouth) 1386

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes 47; Noes 118. (Division List No. 207.)

Original Question put, and agreed to.

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS (SUPPLEMENTARY) ESTIMATES, 1903-4.—CLASS VII.—£8,000, Visit of the President of the French Republic.

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Mr. Lough 1389
Mr. Whitley 1389
The Financial Secretary to the Treasury (*Mr. Elliot, Durham*) 1389

Vote agreed to.

£123,334, Ireland Development Grant.

Mr. O'Mara (*Kilkenny, S.*) 1390
Mr. William Redmond 1390

Vote agreed to.

ARMY (EXCESSES) 1901-2.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum not exceeding £100 be granted to His Majesty, to make good Excesses of Army Expenditure beyond the Grants, for the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1902."

Mr. Whitley 1391

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the sum of £1 be granted for the said service."—(*Mr. Whitley.*)

Sir Arthur Hayter 1391
Mr. Whitley 1391

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 25; Noes, 116. (Division List No. 208.)

Original Question put, and agreed to.

Resolutions to be reported this day; Committee to sit again this day.

SUGAR CONVENTION [EXPENSES AND DUTIES].—Resolution reported—"That it is expedient to authorise the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of a share of the expenses of the Permanent Commission and of any expenses in connection with the attendance of delegates at the Commission, which may be payable under any Act of the present session to make provision for giving effect to a Convention signed the 5th day of March, 1902, in relation to sugar. That the duties payable under Section 2 of the Finance Act, 1901, or any Act amending the same, shall be taken on the delivery of any article from any factory or refinery, which in pursuance of any Act of the present session is made subject to the supervision of the Commissioners of Customs or Commissioners of Inland Revenue, and shall be the same as those payable on the like articles on importation."

Resolution read a second time.

Motion made, and Question put, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the said Resolution."

The House divided:—Ayes, 106; Noes, 28. (Division List No. 209.) 1393

Board of Agriculture and Fisheries Bill [LORDS] [SECOND READING.]—Order for Second Reading read.

Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes (*Huntingdonshire, Ramsey*)... 1397

Motion made, and Question proposed "That the Bill be now read a second time."

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Mr. Dalziel (Kirkcaldy Burghs) 1398

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed for to-morrow.

Sale of Butter Bill.—Order for consideration, as amended (by the Standing Committee) read and discharged. Bill withdrawn 1398

Poor Law (Dissolution of School Districts and Adjustments) Bill.—Read the third time and passed 1399

PUBLIC WORKS LOANS [REMISSION OF DEBT].

(Considered in Committee.)

(In the Committee.)

Resolved, That it is expedient to authorise the remission of a certain debt due to the Public Works Loan Commissioners by the Port Seton Harbour Commissioners in pursuance of any Act of the present session relating to Local Loans.—(*Mr. Elliot.*)

Resolution to be reported to-morrow 1399

Ireland Development Grant Bill.—As amended, considered; to be read the third time to-morrow 1399

Naval Works Bill.—Read the third time, and passed 1399

Naval Works (Portsmouth Barracks Site) Bill.—Order for Second Reading read, and discharged:—Bill withdrawn 1399

Marriages Legislation Bill.—Read a second time, and committed for to-morrow 1399

CIVIL SERVANTS (RETIREMENT AT THE AGE OF SIXTY-FIVE).—Copy ordered, "of Treasury Minute, dated the 30th day of July, 1903, stating the circumstances under which certain Civil Servants have been retained in the service after they have attained the Age of Sixty-five; and of the Return therein referred to."—(*Mr. Elliot*) 1399

POST OFFICE (CONTRACT FOR ACCELERATED MAIL SERVICE TO AND FROM IRELAND *via* CARLISLE, STRANRAER AND LARNE).

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Contract, dated the 8th day of November, 1902, with the Glasgow and South Western Railway Company, the Portpatrick and Wigtownshire Joint Committee, and the Belfast and Northern Counties Railway Company, for an Accelerated Mail Service to and from Ireland *via* Carlisle, Stranraer, and Larne, printed in Parliamentary Paper, No. 56, of session 1903, be approved,"—(*Mr. Elliot.*)—Debate arising.

Debate adjourned till this day 1400

BOARD OF AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES [SALARIES, ETC.].—Committee to consider of authorising the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of any Salaries and Expenses which may become payable under any Act of the present session to transfer to the Board of Agriculture powers and duties relating to the Industry of Fishing, and to amend the Board of Agriculture Act, 1889 (King's Recommendation signified), this day.—(*Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes*) 1400

Whereupon in pursuance of the Order of the House of the 28th day of July, Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House without Question put.

Adjourned at five minutes after One o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.—TUESDAY, 4TH AUGUST, 1903.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Crystal Palace District Gas Bill.—The Chairman of Committees informed the House that the promoters did not intend to proceed further with the Bill. Ordered that the Bill be not further proceeded with... 1401

Bristol Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Maryport Harbour Bill [H.L.]; Manchester Corporation Bill [H.L.].—Commons Amendments considered and agreed to 1401

Kingston upon-Hull Corporation Bill.—Read 3ª, with the Amendments; further Amendments made; Bill passed, and returned to the Commons ... 1401

Dover Corporation Bill.—Read 3ª, with the Amendments, and passed, and returned to the Commons 1401

Croydon and District Electric Tramways Bill.—Reported, with Amendments 1401

Rothesay Corporation Order Confirmation Bill; Scottish Episcopal Clergy Widows' and Orphans' Fund Order Confirmation Bill. Read 3ª (according to Order), and passed 1401

Education Board Provisional Order Confirmation (London) Bill [H.L.]; Gas and Water Orders Confirmation Bill [H.L.].—Commons Amendments considered (according to Order), and agreed to 1401

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

SMALL HOLDINGS ACT, 1892.—Return showing, from the commencement of the Small Holdings Act (1st October, 1892) to the 31st December, 1902—(*a*) the extent of land acquired by local authorities under the Act, with the date of such acquisitions, and the parish or parishes in which the land is situate; (*b*) the sum for which the land was purchased, or the term and rent for which it was hired; (*c*) the amount spent on the adaptation of land for small holdings; (*d*) the number and total acreage of small holdings sold, with the amount of purchase money; (*e*) the number and total acreage of small holdings let, with the yearly rent and terms of letting; and (*f*) the number and total amount of advances made under part II. of the Act: Ordered to be laid before the House—(*The Earl Waldegrave, for the Earl of Onslow.*) 1401

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES.)

No. 3049. France (Nice).
No. 3050. Brazil.
No. 3051. Egypt (Port Said and Suez) 1402

SHIPPING CASUALTIES.—Shipping casualties which occurred on or near the coasts, or in rivers and harbours, of the United Kingdom, from 1st July, 1901, to 30th June, 1902; and shipping casualties which occurred to British vessels elsewhere than on the coasts of the United Kingdom, and to foreign vessels on or near the coasts, or in rivers and harbours, of British possessions abroad, reported during the same period; with charts and appendices . . 1402

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Merchant Shipping Act, 1894.—Return of all British ships ordered by the Board of Trade or its officers, during the period from 1st July, 1902, to 30th June, 1903, to be provisionally detained as unsafe by reason of the defective condition of their hulls, equipments, or machinery, or by reason of overloading or improper loading, in pursuance of the provisions of Section 459 of the Act, giving the names of the owners of those ships which have been dismantled, broken up, or converted into hulks, etc.; also of all foreign ships ordered to be provisionally detained during the same period as unsafe by reason of overloading or improper loading, in pursuance of the provisions of Section 462 of the same Act; together with summaries showing respectively the total number of ships ordered to be detained as unsafe, from 1st July, 1902, to 30th June, 1903, and since the 1st October, 1876, distinguishing between those cases in which the ships were found safe or unsafe (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper [Cd. 1233]) 1402

Inland Revenue.—Forty-sixth Report of the Commissioners of His Majesty's Inland Revenue, for the year ended 31st March, 1903 1403

India (Railways).—Administration Report on the railways in India for 1902.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table 1403

Local Government Act, 1888.—Part I. Orders under Section 57 of the Act, as confirmed by the Local Government Board, of the following County and County Borough Councils:

Carmarthen. For constituting portions of the parishes of Llandybie and Bettws the parish of Ammanford Urban and the Ammanford Urban District.

Carmarthen. For constituting a portion of the parish of Pembrey, the parish of Burry Port Urban, and the Burry Port Urban District.

Essex. For uniting to the parish of Witham and the Witham Urban District an area formerly known as "Faulkbourne Parish (detached No. 1)."

Ipswich (County Borough). For uniting the parishes of St. Mary-at-the-Tower, St. Margaret, St. Helen, St. Clement, St. Mary-at-the-Quay, St. Stephen, St. Lawrence, St. Peter, St. Mary Stoke, St. Nicholas, St. Mary-at-Elms, St. Matthew, Warren House, Shire Hall Yard, Westerfield-in-Ipswich, Rushmere, and Whitton-cum-Thurlston to form the parish of Ipswich.

Lancaster. For constituting the township of Bispham-with-Norbreck the Bispham-with-Norbreck Urban District.

Northampton. For defining the boundary between the parishes of Fotheringhay and Warmington in the Oundle Union.

Southampton. For uniting the parishes of St. Mary's Extra and Sholing to form the parish of Itchen.

Salop. For transferring portions of the parishes of Hadley, Wellington (Rural), and Wrockwardine, in the Wellington (Salop) Rural District, to the parish of Wellington Urban and the Wellington (Salop) Urban District.

Part II. Orders under section 59 of the Act, as confirmed by the Local Government Board, of the following County Councils:

Essex. For amending the County of Essex (East Ham) Confirmation Order, 1900.

Kent. For amending the County of Kent (Bexley and East Wickham) Confirmation Order, 1902).

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table 1403

SMALL HOLDINGS ACT, 1892.—Return respecting; laid before the House (pursuant to Order of this day), and to be printed. (No. 192.) 1404

County Courts Jurisdiction Extension Bill.—Reported from the Standing Committee with Amendments. The Report thereof to be received on Thursday next; and to be printed as amended. (No. 186.) 1404

Fertilisers and Feeding Stuffs Bill [H.L.].—A Bill to amend the law with respect to the sale of agricultural fertilisers and feeding stuffs: was presented by the Viscount Templetown; read 1ª; to be printed; and to be read 2ª on Friday next. (No. 187.) 1404

Addenbrooke's Hospital Bill.—[SECOND READING.]—Order of the Day for the Second Reading read 1404

Viscount Cross 1404

Moved, that the Bill be now read 2ª (*Viscount Cross*).

On Question, Bill read 2ª, and committed to a Committee of the whole House on Thursday next.

Licensing Acts (Scotland) Consolidation and Amendment Bill.—On the Order being read for the House going into Committee on this Bill,

The Secretary of State for Scotland (*Lord Balfour of Burleigh*) 1405
The Earl of Camperdown 1406

House in Committee (according to Order).

Clause 1.

The Earl of Aberdeen 1407

Amendment moved:—

"In page 1, line 10, to leave out the word 'Courts' and to insert the word 'authorities.'"—(*The Earl of Aberdeen*).

Lord Balfour of Burleigh 1408

Amendment, by leave of the House, withdrawn

Clause 1 agreed to.

Clause 2.

The Earl of Aberdeen 1408

Amendment moved—

"In page 1, line 13, to leave out from the word 'burgh' to the word 'the' in line 15."—(*The Earl of Aberdeen.*)

Lord Balfour of Burleigh 1409

Amendment, by leave of the House, withdrawn.

Clause 2 agreed to.

Clauses 3 and 4 agreed to.

Clause 5.

The Earl of Camperdown 1410

Amendment moved—

"In page 4, lines 12 and 23, to leave out the word 'retiral' and to insert the word 'retirement.'"—(*The Earl of Camperdown.*)

Lord Balfour of Burleigh 1410

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Clause 5, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 6 to 9 agreed to.

Clause 10.

Lord Balfour of Burleigh 1411

Amendment moved—

"In page 10, line 28, after Sub-section (1.) (*c.*) to insert as a new sub-section the words: (*d.*) 'The Royal burghs of Kilrenny, Pittenweem, Anstruther Easter and Anstruther Wester shall be deemed to form one Royal burgh, and the magistrates of the said burghs shall be deemed to be the magistrates of the burgh so formed, and the meetings of the licensing Court for such burgh shall, except as otherwise appointed by the Court, be held in the Royal burgh of Anstruther Easter, and the town clerk of the Royal burgh of Anstruther Easter shall be clerk to the licensing Court; and'"—(*Lord Balfour of Burleigh.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Clause 10, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 11.

Amendment moved—

"In page 11, line 26, to leave out the words 'next ensuing' and to insert the words 'or half-year next ensuing as the case may be.'"—(*Lord Balfour of Burleigh.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Clause 11, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 12 to 16 agreed to.

Clause 17.

Amendment moved—

"In page 14, line 23, to leave out the words 'to any party' and to insert the words 'to any officer of Inland Revenue without payment, and to any other person.'"—(*Lord Balfour of Burleigh.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Clause 17, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 18 to 30 agreed to.

Clause 31.

Lord Balfour of Burleigh 1412

Amendment moved—

"In page 20, line 17, at beginning of clause, to insert as a new sub-section the words (1) 'A licensing Court may at any October half-yearly meeting grant to a new tenant or occupant a transfer of any certificate then subsisting for any house or premises as aforesaid.'"—(*Lord Balfour of Burleigh.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Clause 31, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 32.

Consequential Amendment agreed to.

Clause 32, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 33 to 40 agreed to.

Clause 41.

Lord Kinnaird 1413

Amendment moved—

"In page 24, line 31, after the word 'necessary' to insert as a new paragraph the words: (*g*) 'For regulating or preventing the employment of barmaids.'"—(*Lord Kinnaird.*)

Lord Balfour of Burleigh... 1413

Amendment, by leave of the House, withdrawn.

The Earl of Camperdown 1414
Lord Balfour of Burleigh 1415

Clause 41 agreed to.

Clauses 42 to 47 agreed to.

Clause 48.

Lord Balfour of Burleigh 1416

Amendment moved—

"In page 28, line 24, to leave out from the words 'in calculating' to the word 'disregarded' in line 25.'"—(*Lord Balfour of Burleigh.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Clause 48, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 49 to 54 agreed to.

Clause 55.

Lord Balfour of Burleigh 1416

Amendment moved—

"In page 30, line 32, to leave out the words 'at any prohibited hour of any day' and to insert the words 'at any time when such giving out and supply would be otherwise illegal.'"—(*Lord Balfour of Burleigh.*)

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On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Amendment moved—

"In page 30, line 39, at end of clause to insert the words 'the procurator fiscal shall transmit a list of such orders received by him, showing the names and descriptions of all persons signing the same during the current half-year, to the clerk of the licensing Court seven days before the day fixed for each half-yearly meeting of such Court.'"—(*Lord Balfour of Burleigh.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Clause 55, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 56 to 70 agreed to.

Clause 71.

Lord Balfour of Burleigh 1417

Amendment moved—

"In page 38, line 28, at end, to insert the words 'and in default of such caution being found to be imprisoned for a period not exceeding thirty days.'"—(*Lord Balfour of Burleigh.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Clause 71, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 72 agreed to.

Clause 73.

Earl Russell 1418

Amendment moved—

"To leave out Clause 73."—(*Earl Russell.*)

Lord Balfour of Burleigh 1418

Amendment, by leave of the House, withdrawn.

Clause 73 agreed to.

Clauses 74 and 75 agreed to.

Clause 76.

Consequential Amendment agreed to.

Clause 76, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 77 to 91 agreed to.

Clause 92.

Lord Balfour of Burleigh 1419

Amendment moved—

"In page 49, line 3, after the word 'to' to insert the words 'days or'; and in line 4, after the word 'time' to insert the words 'on any day other than Sunday.'"—(*Lord Balfour of Burleigh.*)

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The Earl of Camperdown 1419

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Clause 92, as amended, agreed to.

Remaining Clauses agreed to.

First Schedule agreed to.

Second Schedule amended and agreed to.

Third to eighth Schedule agreed to.

Ninth Schedule amended and agreed to.

Remaining Schedules agreed to.

Bill reported, with Amendments, to the House: Standing Committee negatived.

The Report of Amendments to be received *To-morrow*; and Bill to be *printed* as amended.

Post Office Sites Bill.—Read 2ª (according to Order), and committed for Thursday next 1421

London Education Bill.—Amendments reported (according to Order.)

The President of the Board of Education (*the Marquess of Londonderry*)... 1421

Amendments moved—

"In the first schedule, paragraph 9, page 4, line 16, to leave out the words 'qualifications required by' and to insert the words 'provisions of'; and in line 17, after the word 'institution' to insert the words 'imposing any limit on the number of the members of the governing body or requiring any qualification for those members'; and to leave out the word 'to' and insert the words 'as respects.'"—(*The Marquess of Londonderry.*)

On Question, Amendments agreed to.

The Marquess of Londonderry 1422

Amendment moved—

"In the first Schedule, page 4, line 20, to leave out the words 'The managers of all public elementary schools,' and to insert the words 'A manager of a public elementary school provided by the Local Education Authority'; and in line 21 to leave out from the word 'years' to the end of the paragraph, and to insert the words 'but may be re-appointed.'"—(*The Marquess of Londonderry.*)

Lord Tweedmouth 1422
Earl Spencer 1423
The Earl of Camperdown 1423
The Lord President of the Council (*The Duke of Devonshire*) 1424
The Lord Bishop of Hereford 1424
The Lord Archbishop of Canterbury 1424

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

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The Lord Bishop of Hereford 1424

Amendment moved—

"In the first Schedule, page 4, after paragraph 11, to insert the following new paragraphs—

'(*a*) The Local Education Authority may, by its by-laws dealing with school attendance, require all children who leave school before reaching the seventh standard, or such other standard as may be fixed by the by-laws, to attend continuation classes until they reach this standard or, failing this, attain the age of sixteen years; and the minimum number of attendances required in each year shall be ninety of one hour each, it being provided that duly registered attendance at a Sunday school or Bible class shall, if the parents so desire, be reckoned for not more than thirty of the ninety attendances required.

'(*b*) Parents and employers contravening such by-law shall be liable to a fine not exceeding forty shillings for each offence.'"—(*The Lord Bishop of Hereford.*)

The Lord Archbishop of Canterbury 1426
The Lord Archbishop of York 1426
The Marquess of Londonderry 1426

Amendment, by leave of the House, withdrawn.

Bill to be read 3ª to-morrow; and to be printed as amended. (No. 189.)

Bills of Exchange Act, 1882, Amendment Bill [H.L.]—Read 3ª (according to Order), and passed, and sent to the Commons.

POST OFFICE MAINS.—

Lord Kinnaird 1427
Lord Balfour of Burleigh 1427

A WEDNESDAY SITTING.

The Duke of Devonshire 1429
The Earl of Crewe... 1429

Naval Works Bill.—Brought from the Commons. Read 1ª; to be printed and to be read 2ª on Friday next.—(*The Earl of Selborne.*) (No. 190) ... 1430

Poor Law (Dissolution of School Districts and Adjustments) Bill.—Brought from the Commons. Read 1ª; to be printed; and to be read 2ª to-morrow.—(*The Lord Kenyon.*) (No. 191) 1430

House adjourned at ten minutes past Six o'clock till to-morrow, half-past Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS: TUESDAY, 4th AUGUST, 1903.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Baker Street and Waterloo Railway (Extension of Time) Bill; Beckenham Urban District Council Bill; London County Council (Money) Bill; London County Council (Tramways and Improvements) Bill; Mullingar, Kells, and Drogheda Railway Bill.—Lords' Amendments considered, and agreed to 1430

Somerset and District Electric Power Bill [LORDS] (Prince of Wales's Consent, as Duke of Cornwall, signified).—Read the third time, and passed, with Amendments 1430

Bradford Corporation Bill [LORDS]; Bury and District Joint Water Board Bill [Lords].—As amended, considered; to be read the third time ... 1430

North-Western Electricity and Power-Gas Bill [LORDS].—As amended, considered; Amendments made; Bill to be read the third time 1430

Salford Corporation Bill [LORDS].—As amended, considered; to be read the third time 1430

Shropshire and Worcestershire Electric Power Bill [LORDS].—As amended, considered; An Amendment made: Bill to be read the third time 1430

Airdie and Coatbridge Tramways Order Confirmation Bill; Lerwick Harbour Improvements Act (1877) Amendment Order Confirmation Bill.—Considered; to be read the third time To-morrow 1431

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have agreed to—Great Central Railway Bill; Gateshead Corporation Bill; South Yorkshire Joint Railways Bill; North Eastern Railway Bill; Sheffield Corporation Bill; Cork Harbour Bill, with Amendments.

Amendment to Bournemouth Gas and Water Bill [Lords].

That they have agreed to, Amendments to Tramways Orders Confirmation (No. 1) Bill [Lords]; Tramways Orders Confirmation (No. 2) Bill [Lords]; Chard Corporation Gas and Electricity Bill [Lords]; Rochester Corporation Tramways and Improvements Bill [Lords]; Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Tramways Bill [Lords]; West Bromwich Corporation Bill [Lords]; Hove, Worthing, and District Tramways Bill [Lords]; South Eastern and London, Chatham, and Dover Railways Bill [Lords]; Scottish Ontario and Manitoba Land Company Bill [Lords], without Amendment.

PETITIONS.

LICENCES RENEWAL AND TRANSFER BILL AND LICENSING LAW (COMPENSATION FOR NON-RENEWAL) BILL.—Petition from Flimby, against; to lie upon the Table 1431

MOTOR-CARS (SPEED).—Petition from Perth, for legislation; to lie upon the Table 1431

VACCINATION ACTS 1867 TO 1898.—Petition from Eastbourne, for repeal; to lie upon the Table 1431

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

MERCHANT SHIPPING ACT, 1894 (VESSELS DETAINED).—Copy presented, of Return of all ships ordered by the Board of Trade, or its officers, during the period from the 1st July, 1902 to 30th June, 1903, to be provisionally detained as unsafe, together with summaries, etc. (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper [C. 1233]) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table ... 1431

SHIPPING CASUALTIES (1901–2).—Copy presented, of Abstract of the Returns of shipping casualties which occurred on or near the coasts or in rivers and harbours of the United Kingdom from the 1st July, 1901 to 30th June, 1902, and of the Returns of shipping casualties to British vessels elsewhere than on the coasts of the United Kingdom, and to foreign vessels on or near the coasts, or in rivers and harbours of British possessions abroad, etc., with Charts and Appendices [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1432

COAL TABLES, 1902.—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered, 30th July; *Mr. Gerald Balfour*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 312.] 1432

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT, 1888.—Copies presented, of Orders made by the various County and County Borough Councils in England and Wales under Sections 57 and 59 of the Act, as confirmed by the Local Government Board [by Act]; to lie upon the Table 1432

INLAND REVENUE.—Copy presented, of Forty-Sixth Report of the Commissioners, for the year ended 31st March, 1903 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1432

CIVIL SERVANTS (RETIREMENT AT THE AGE OF SIXTY-FIVE).—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 3rd August; *Mr. Elliot*]: to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 313.] 1432

EAST INDIA (RAILWAYS).—Copy presented, of Administration Report on the Railways in India for the year 1902, by A. Brereton, Esquire, Secretary to the Government of India Public Works Department, Railways [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1432

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).—Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3049 to 3051 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1433

NAVY (EXCEPTIONS TO KING'S REGULATIONS).—Copy presented, of list of exceptions to the King's Regulations as to pay, non-effective pay, and allowances during the year 1902–3 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1433

ADJOURNMENT MOTIONS UNDER STANDING ORDER No. 10.—Return ordered, "of Motions for Adjournment under Standing Order No. 10, showing the date of such Motion, the name of the Member proposing, the definite matter of urgent public importance, and the result of any Division taken thereon during session 1903 (in the same form as, and in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 391, of session 1902)." (*Mr. Caldwell*) 1433

DIVISIONS OF THE HOUSE.—Return ordered, "of the number of Divisions of the House in session 1903; stating the subject of the Division, and the number of Members in the majority and minority, Tellers included; also, the aggregate number in the House on each Division; distinguishing the Divisions of public business from private; and also the number of Divisions before and after midnight (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 0.238, session 1902)." (*Mr. Caldwell.*) 1433

PUBLIC BILLS.—Return ordered, "of the number of Public Bills, distinguishing Government from other Bills, introduced into this House, or brought from the House of Lords, during session 1903; showing the number which received the Royal Assent; the number which were passed by this House but not by the House of Lords; the number passed by the House of Lords but not by this House; and distinguishing the stages at which such Bills as did not receive the Royal Assent were dropped or postponed and rejected in either House of Parliament (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 0.237, of session 1902)."—(*Mr. Caldwell.*) 1433

CLOSURE OF DEBATE (STANDING ORDER No. 26).—Return ordered, "respecting application of Standing Order No. 26 (closure of debate) during session 1903, under the following heads :— (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 392, of session 1902)."—(*Mr. Caldwell.*) 1434

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.
Date when Closure moved.	By whom moved.	Question before House or Committee when moved.	Whether in House or Committee.	Whether assent given to Motion or withheld by Speaker or Chairman.	Assent withheld because, in the opinion of the Chair, a decision would shortly be arrived at without that Motion.	Result of Motion, and, if a Division, Numbers for and against.

PUBLIC PETITIONS.—Return ordered, "of the number of public Petitions presented and printed in session 1903; with the total number of signatures in that year (in continuation of the Parliamentary Paper No. 0.236, of session 1902)."—(*Mr. Caldwell.*) 1434

SELECT COMMITTEES.—Return ordered, "of the number of Select Committees appointed in session 1903, including the Standing Committees and the Court of Referees; the subjects of inquiry; the names of the Members appointed to serve on each, and of the Chairman of each; the number of days each Committee met, and the number of days each Member attended; the total expense of the attendance of witnesses at each Select Committee, and the name of the Member who moved for such Select Committee; also, the total number of Members who served on Select Committees (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 0.234, of session 1902)."—(*Mr. Caldwell.*) 1434

SITTINGS OF THE HOUSE.—Return ordered, "of the number of days on which the House sat in session 1903, stating for each day the date of the month and day of the week, the hour of the meeting, and the hour of adjournment; and the total number of hours occupied in the sittings of the House, and the average time; and showing the number of hours on which the House sat each day, and the number of hours after midnight; and the number of entries in each day's Votes and Proceedings (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 0.235, of session 1902)."—(*Mr. Caldwell.*) ... 1435

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (DAYS OCCUPIED BY GOVERNMENT AND BY PRIVATE MEMBERS.—Return ordered, "showing, with reference to session 1903, (1) the number of sittings at which, in accordance with the Standing Orders, Government Business had precedence; (2) the number of evening sittings on Tuesdays and Wednesdays, and the number of sittings on Fridays at which private Members had precedence under the Standing Orders; (3) the number of sittings at which Government Business had precedence under a special Order of the House; (4) the number of Saturday sittings; (5) the total number of sittings at which Government Business had precedence; (6) the total number of days on which the House sat; (7) the total number of Motions for Adjournment of the House on a matter of urgent public importance; and (8) the number of days on which Business of Supply was considered (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 393, of session 1902)."—(*Mr. Caldwell.*) 1435

PRIVATE BILLS AND PRIVATE BUSINESS.

Return ordered, " of the number of Private Bills, Hybrid Bills, and Bills for confirming Provisional Orders introduced into the House of Commons and brought from the House of Lords, and of Acts passed in session 1903, classed according to the following subjects : Railways, tramways, tramroads, subways, canals and navigation, roads and bridges, water, waterworks, gas, gas and water, lighting and improvement, police and sanitary regulations, corporations, &c. (not relating to police and sanitary regulations or to lighting and improvement schemes) ; ports, piers, harbours and docks ; churches, chapels, and burying grounds ; markets and fairs ; gaols and other county buildings ; inclosure and drainage ; estate ; divorce ; naturalisation ; hospitals and miscellaneous."

" Of all the Private Bills, Hybrid Bills, and Bills for confirming Provisional Orders which in session 1903 have been reported on by Committees on Opposed Private Bills or by Committees nominated partly by the House and partly by the Committee of Selection, together with the names of the selected Members who served on each Committee ; the first and also the last day of the sitting of each Committee ; the number of days on which each Committee sat ; the number of days on which each selected Member has served ; the number of days occupied by each Bill in Committee ; the Bills the Preambles of which were reported to have been proved ; the Bills the Preambles of which were reported to have been not proved ; and, in the case of Bills for confirming Provisional Orders, whether the Provisional Orders ought or ought not to be confirmed."

" Of all Private Bills and Bills for confirming Provisional Orders which, in session 1903, have been referred by the Committee of Selection, or by the General Committee on Railway and Canal Bills, to the Chairman of the Committee of Ways and Means, together with the names of the Members who served on each Committee ; the number of days on which each Committee sat ; and the number of days on which each Member attended."

" And of the number of Private Bills, Hybrid Bills, and Bills for confirming Provisional Orders withdrawn or not proceeded with by the parties, those Bills being specified which have been referred to Committees and dropped during the sittings of the Committee (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 0.233, of session 1902."—(*Mr. Caldwell.*) 1436

TECHNICAL EDUCATION (APPLICATION OF FUNDS BY LOCAL AUTHORITIES.—Return ordered " showing the extent to which, and the manner in which, local authorities in England and Wales have applied funds to the purposes of technical education (including science, art, technical, and manual instruction) during the year 1902–3, under the following Acts : Local Taxation (Customs and Excise) Act, 1890 ; Technical Instruction Acts, 1889 and 1891 ; Welsh Intermediate Education Act, 1889 ; and Public Libraries and Museums Acts."—(*Sir William Anson.*) 1437

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

ORPHAN AND DESERTED CHILDREN.—Question, Mr. Harwood (Bolton) ; Answer, Mr. Walter Long 1437

ABLE-BODIED MEN IN METROPOLITAN WORKHOUSES.—Question, Mr. Talbot (Oxford University) ; Answer, Mr. Walter Long 1437

RETURN OF DUTIES ON IMPORTS INTO BRITISH COLONIES.—Question, Mr. Alfred Davies (Carmarthen Boroughs) ; Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour ... 1438

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Petitions of Dockyard Employees.—Question, Mr. Reginald Lucas (Portsmouth); Answer, Mr. Elliot 1438

Postal Deliveries at Holyhead.—Question, Mr. Ellis Griffiths (Anglesey); Answer, Mr. Austen Chamberlain 1439

Baghdad Railway and German Capital.—Question, Mr. Reginald Lucas; Answer, Lord Cranborne 1439

Surrender to Chinese Authorities of the Prisoners in the Supas Sedition Case.—Question, Mr. Weir (Ross and Cromarty); Answer, Lord Cranborne 1439

Reduction of Teachers' Salaries by the New Education Authorities.—Question, Mr. Mansfield (Lincolnshire, Spalding); Answer, Sir William Anson 1440

South African Garrison—India's Charge—Protest by the Viceroy.—Question, Mr. Weir; Answer, Lord George Hamilton 1441

Promotion of Second Division Clerks Holding Staff Posts.—Question, Colonel Wyndham-Quin (Glamorganshire, S.); Answer, Mr. Elliot ... 1441

Contracts for Supply of Jam and Tinned Rations for the Navy.—Question, Mr. Keir Hardie (Merthyr Tydvil); Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster 1441

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Imperial Yeomanry.—Question, Mr. Mansfield (Lincolnshire, Spalding); Answer, The Secretary of State for War (Mr. Brodrick, Surrey, Guildford) 1442

Naval Fortresses.—Question, Sir John Colomb (Great Yarmouth); Answer, Mr. Brodrick 1442

Imperial Yeomanry at Naval Fortresses.—Question, Sir John Colomb; Answer, Mr. Brodrick 1443

British and Russian Navies.—Question, Mr. Yerburgh (Chester); Answer, The Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Arnold-Forster, Belfast, W.) ... 1443

Naval Volunteers in the Channel Islands.—Question, Sir Charles Dilke (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean); Answer, Mr. Arnold-Forster 1444

Roman Catholic Chaplains on Training Ships.—Questions, Mr. Carew (Meath, S.) and Major Jameson (Clare, W.); Answers, Mr. Arnold-Forster 1444

Brussels Sugar Convention—British Terms of Ratification.—Question, Mr. Edmund Robertson (Dundee); Answer, The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs (Lord Cranborne, Rochester) 1445

Workmen's Compensation Act.—Question, Sir Charles Dilke (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean); Answer, The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. Akers Douglas, Kent, St. Augustine's) 1445

Civil Pensions and Gratuities.—Question, Mr. Edmund Robertson; Answer, The Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Elliot, Durham) 1446

Birchet's Green National School, Berkshire.—Question, Mr. Harwood (Bolton); Answer, The Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Education (Sir William Anson, Oxford University) 1447

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EXTRA POLICE IN COUNTY CLARE.—Question, Mr. William Redmond (Clare, E.); Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. Wyndham, Dover) ... 1447

GREENCASTLE ORANGE DISTURBANCE.—Questions, Mr. Sloan (Belfast, S.) and Mr. Joseph Devlin (Kilkenny, N.); Answers, Mr. Wyndham 1448

BELFAST DISTURBANCES.—Question, Mr. Sloan; Answer, Mr. Wyndham ... 1449

CORK SPRING ASSIZES MURDER TRIAL.—Question, Mr. O'Shaughnessy (Limerick, W.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1449

EVICTED FARM IN COUNTY MAYO.—Question, Dr. Ambrose (Mayo, W.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1450

FISCAL INQUIRY—THE MANCHESTER MEETING.—Question, Mr. Mansfield; Answer, the Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.) 1451

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.—Questions, Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman (Stirling Burghs), Mr. Lough (Islington, W.), Colonel Lockwood (Essex, Epping), Mr. John Redmond (Waterford), Mr. Weir (Ross and Cromarty), Mr. Herbert Samuel (Yorkshire, Cleveland) and Mr. Cripps (Lancashire, Stretford); Answers, Mr. A. J. Balfour 1451

Pistols Bill.—Lords Amendments to be considered forthwith; considered and agreed to 1453

POLICE AND SANITARY COMMITTEE.—Special Report from the Select Committee, brought up and read.

Special Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 314.]

Minutes of Proceedings to be printed. [No. 314.] 1453

NEW BILLS.

COUNTY AND BOROUGH COUNCILS AND METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCILS (QUALIFICATION OF WOMEN) BILL.—"To enable Women to be elected and act as members of County and Borough Councils and Metropolitan Borough Councils," presented by Mr. Channing; supported by Mr. Bousfield, Mr. Crooks, Mr. Emmott, Mr. Ernest Grey, Mr. Lough, Mr. M'Kenna, and Mr. Yerburgh; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 311.] 1454

ISLE OF MAN (CUSTOMS) BILL.—"To amend the Law with respect to Customs Duties in the Isle of Man," presented by Mr. Elliot; to be read a second time to-morrow, and to be printed. [Bill 307.] 1454

MOTOR-CARS BILL.—[LORDS]—[SECOND READING.]—Order for Second Reading read.

The President of the Local Government Board (Mr. Walter Long, Bristol, S.) 1454

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Mr. Soares (Devonshire, Barnstaple) 1459
Mr. Luke White (Yorkshire, E.R., Buckrose) 1469

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day three months.'"—(*Mr. Soares.*)

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Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

Mr. Cripps (Lancashire, Stretford) 1474
Mr. William McArthur (Cornwall, St. Austell) 1478
Mr. Scott-Montagu (Hampshire, New Forest) 1480
Mr. Lawson Walton (Leeds, S.) 1485
Mr. Burdett-Coutts (Westminster) 1488
Mr. Norman (Wolverhampton, S.) 1492
Sir Philip Muntz (Warwickshire, Tamworth) 1497
Major Jameson (Clare, W.) 1499
Mr. John Stroyan (Perthshire, W.) 1501
Sir Brampton Gurdon (Norfolk, N.) 1502
Sir Fortescue Flannery (Yorkshire, Shipley) 1503
Mr. Helme (Lancashire, Lancaster) 1504
Mr. Walter Long 1505
Sir Walter Foster (Derbyshire, Ilkeston) 1508
Mr. William Redmond (Clare, E.) 1509
Mr. Murray (Coventry) 1511
Mr. Seely (Lincoln) 1511
Mr. Labouchere (Northampton) 1513
Mr. Butcher (York) 1514
Mr. Spear (Devonshire, Tavistock) 1515
Mr. John Dewar (Inverness) 1515
Mr. Louis Sinclair (Essex, Romford) 1516

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Main Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed for Friday.

Patent Office Extension (Re-Committed) Bill.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. GRANT LAWSON (Yorkshire, N.R., Thirsk) in the Chair.]

Clause 3.

Mr. Whitley (Halifax) 1517
The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Gerald Balfour, Leeds, Central) 1518
Sir Walter Foster (Derbyshire, Ilkeston) 1518
Sir John Gorst (Cambridge University) 1518
Mr. Cawley (Lancashire, Prestwich) 1519
Mr. Victor Cavendish (Derbyshire, W.) 1519
Mr. Lloyd-George (Carnarvon Boroughs) 1519

Motion made, and Question put, "That the clause stand part of the Bill."

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 187; Noes, 73. (Division List No. 210.)

Motion made, and Question "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again." (*Mr. Caldwell*) put, and agreed to.

Committee report Progress: to sit again this evening.

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EVENING SITTING.

Fife Electric Power Bill [Lords] (By Order).—Lords reason for disagreeing to one of the Commons' Amendments to the Bill, considered—

Resolved, That this House doth not insist upon the Amendment to which the Lords have disagreed.—(*Mr. Caldwell.*)

Wood Green Urban District Council Bill (By Order).—Lords' Amendments considered—

Lords' Amendment to the Amendment.

"In page 26, line 31."

Agreed to.

Lords' Amendment—

"In page 26, line 31, after the word 'make,' to insert the words 'Nothing in this section shall apply to milk in the possession of any railway company until its arrival at the station of destination.'"

The next Amendment read a second time.

Mr Heywood Johnstone (*Sussex, Horsham*) 1523

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House doth disagree with the Lords in the said Amendment."—(*Mr Heywood Johnstone.*)

Sir Frederick Banbury (*Camberwell, Peckham*) 1525
Mr. Kearley (*Devonport*) 1526
The Chairman of Committees (*Mr. J. W. Lowther, Cumberland, Penrith*) 1526

Question put, and agreed to.

Subsequent Lords' Amendments agreed to.

Committee appointed to draw up reasons to be assigned to the Lords for disagreeing to one of their Amendments to the Bill.

Committee nominated of—The Chairman of Ways and Means, Mr. Heywood Johnstone, Mr. Whitley, Mr. Luke White, and Sir Frederick Banbury. Three to form a quorum.

To withdraw immediately.—(*The Chairman of Ways and Means.*)

Standing Orders.

Standing Order 135, relating to Private Business, read and amended, in lines 1 and 2, by inserting, after the words "in any street," the words "or road."

At end, by adding the words "and it shall be competent to the Referees on Private Bills to admit the Petitioners, being the owners, lessees, or occupiers of any house, shop, or warehouse having its access materially dependent on such street or road, and making the aforesaid allegations, to be heard against the Bill, if they think fit."—(*The Chairman of Ways and Means*) 1527

Glasgow Corporation (Police) Order Confirmation Bill [Lords] (By Order).—Read the third time, and passed, without amendment 1527

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Lanarkshire Tramways Order Confirmation Bill [LORDS] (BY ORDER).—Considered; to be read the third time to-morrow 1527

Glasgow Corporation Tramways Order Confirmation Bill [LORDS] (BY ORDER).—Read a second time; to be considered to-morrow 1527

Wood Green Urban District Council Bill (BY ORDER).—Reasons for disagreeing to one of the Lords' Amendments reported, and agreed to. To be communicated to the Lords... 1527

Sugar Convention Bill.

(Considered in the Committee.)

(In the Committee).

[Mr. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith) in the Chair.]

Clause 1.

Mr. Levy (Leicestershire, Loughborough)... 1528

Amendment proposed—

"In page 1, line 14, leave out Sub-section (1)."—(*Mr. Levy.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out to the word 'is' in line 15, stand part of the clause."

Mr. Lough (Islington, W.)... 1530
Mr. Sydney Buxton (Tower Hamlets, Stepney) 1531
The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Gerald Balfour, Leeds, Central) 1532
Sir Charles Dilke (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean) 1534
Mr. Robson (South Shields) 1535
Mr. Bryce (Aberdeen, S.) 1536
Mr. Lloyd George (Carnarvon Boroughs) 1537
Mr. Moulton (Cornwall, Launceston) 1538
Mr. Bousfield (Hackney, N.) 1539
Mr. Lawson Walton (Leeds, S.) 1540
Mr. Shackleton (Lancashire, Clitheroe) 1541
Mr. Kearley (Devonport) 1543
Mr. Cawley (Lancashire, Prestwich) 1544
Mr. Theodore Taylor (Lancashire, Radcliffe) 1544
Mr. Guest (Plymouth) 1546
Mr. Ure (Linlithgowshire)... 1548
Lieutenant-Colonel Geo. Kemp (Lancashire, Heywood) 1548
Mr. Runciman (Dewsbury) 1549

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 154; Noes, 86. (Division List No. 211.)

Mr. Sydney Buxton 1551

Amendment proposed—

"In page 1, line 15, after the word 'bounty,' to insert the words 'as defined in the Convention, the provisions of which are set forth in the schedule to this Act.'"—(*Mr. Sydney Buxton.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

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Mr. Gerald Balfour 1554
Mr. Moulton 1555
Mr. Lough 1556
Lord Hugh Cecil (Greenwich) 1556
Mr. Bryce 1557
Sir Charles Dilke 1557
Mr. Lawson Walton 1559
Mr. Lloyd George 1560
Mr. Runciman (Dewsbury) 1561
Mr. Whitley 1562
Mr. Courtenay Warner (Staffordshire, Lichfield) 1566

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 61; Noes, 118. (Division List No. 212.)

Committee report Progress, to sit again this day.

Patent Office Extension (Re-Committed) Bill.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith) in the Chair.]

Mr. Whitley (Halifax) 1567
The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Ritchie, Croydon) 1567

Clause 4 agreed to.

Remaining clauses agreed to.

Bill reported without Amendment.

Bill read the third time and passed.

NAVY AND ARMY EXPENDITURE 1901-2.—Committee to consider the saving and deficiencies upon Navy and Army grants for 1901-2, and the temporary sanction obtained from the Treasury by the Navy and Army Departments to the expenditure not provided for in the grants for that year, upon Thursday.

Ordered, That Appropriation Accounts for the Navy and Army Departments, which were presented on the 23rd and 24th days of February last, respectively be referred to the Committee.—(*Mr. Elliot.*) 1567

MOTOR-CARS [EXCISE DUTY].—Committee to consider of authorising the imposition of an Excise Duty on persons employed as drivers of motor-cars in pursuance of any Act of the present session to amend the Locomotives on Highways Act, 1896 (King's recommendation signified) this day.—(*Sir A. Acland-Hood*) 1567

Whereupon, in pursuance of the Order of the House of the 28th day of July, Mr. Speaker adjourned the House without Question put.

Adjourned at twenty minutes after One o'clock.

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HOUSE OF LORDS, WEDNESDAY, 5TH AUGUST, 1903.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Hainault Forest Bill.—Read 3ª, with the Amendments, and passed, and returned to the Commons 1569

Glasgow Corporation (Police) Order Confirmation Bill [H.L.].—Returned from the Commons agreed to 1569

Somerset and District Electric Power Bill [H.L.]; Birmingham District Tramways Bill [H.L.].—Returned from the Commons agreed to, with Amendments. The said Amendments considered, and agreed to 1569

Baker Street and Waterloo Railway Extension of Time Bill; Beckenham Urban District Council Bill; London County Council (Money) Bill; London County Council (Tramways and Improvements) Bill; Mullingar, Kells, and Drogheda Railway Bill.—Returned from the Commons, with the Amendments agreed to... 1569

Wood Green Urban District Council Bill.—Returned from the Commons with several of the Amendments agreed to, and one disagreed to, with reasons for such disagreement... 1569

Fife Electric Power Bill [H.L.].—Returned from the Commons with the Amendment to which the Lords have disagreed, not insisted on 1569

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

CLERGY (WEST INDIES).—Return of the amount payable on 5th January, 1903, out of the Consolidated Fund, for ecclesiastical purposes in the West Indies 1569

SUPERANNUATION ACT, 1887.—Return for the year ended 31st March, 1903, of the Army and Navy Officers permitted under Rule 2 of the Regulations drawn up under Section 6 of the Superannuation Act, 1887, to hold civil employment of profit under public departments. Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table 1569

Patent Office (Extension) Bill.—Brought from the Commons 1569

Pistols Bill.—Returned from the Commons, with the Amendments agreed to... 1570

Licensing Acts (Scotland) Consolidation and Amendment Bill.—Amendments reported (according to Order), and Bill to be read 3ª on Monday next 1570

London Education Bill.—Read 3ª (according to Order), and passed, and returned to the Commons 1570

Poor Law (Dissolution of School Districts and Adjustments) Bill.—[SECOND READING].—Order of the day for the Second Reading read.

Lord Kenyon... 1570

Moved—"That the Bill be now read 2ª."—*Lord Kenyon.*

On Question, Bill read 2ª (according to Order), and committed to a Committee of the Whole House to-morrow.

Marine Store Dealers (Ireland) Bill.—The Report of Amendments to be received to-morrow 1571

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Patent Office (Extension) Bill.—Read 1ª; to be printed and referred to the Examiners. [No. 193.] 1571

House adjourned at twenty minutes before Five o'clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS, WEDNESDAY, 5TH AUGUST, 1903.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

South Shields Corporation Bill.—Lords' Amendments considered, and agreed to 1572

Bangor Corporation Bill [LORDS].—As amended, considered; Amendments made; Bill to be read the third time.... 1572

Hastings Harbour Bill [LORDS].—Read a second time, and committed ... 1572

East Ham Improvement Bill (BY ORDER). Lords Amendments considered:

Lords Amendments as far as the Amendment in page 13, agreed to.

Lords Amendments, in page 13, to leave out Clause 14, and insert 14A, the next Amendment, read a second time, amended and agreed to.

Subsequent Lords' Amendments agreed to 1572

Airdrie and Coatbridge Tramways Order Confirmation Bill; Lerwick Harbour Improvements Act (1877) Amendment Order Confirmation Bill.—Read the third time and passed 1572

Lanarkshire Tramways Order Confirmation Bill [LORDS].—Read the third time, and passed, without Amendment... 1572

Glasgow Corporation Tramways Order Confirmation Bill [LORDS].—Considered; to be read the third time to-morrow 1572

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

LAND REGISTRY.—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered, 19th May; *Mr. Henry David Greene*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 315.] 1572

CLERGY (WEST INDIES).—Copy presented, of Return of the Amount payable on 5th January, 1903, out of the Consolidated Fund for ecclesiastical purposes in the West Indies [by Act]; to lie upon the Table. 1573

SUPERANNUATION ACT, 1887.—Copy presented, of Return for the year ended 31st March, 1903, of the Army and Navy officers permitted under Rule 2 of the Regulations drawn up under Section 6 of the Act, to hold civil employment of profit under Public Departments [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 316.] 1573

PRISONS (IRELAND).—Copy presented, of twenty-fifth Report of the General Prisons Board (Ireland) for 1902-3, with an Appendix [by Command]; to lie upon the Table 1573

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CASUALTIES TO SHIPS.—Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 17th March; *Mr. Lough*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 317.] ... 1573

Papers laid upon the Table by the Clerk of the House.

ADJOURNMENT MOTIONS UNDER STANDING ORDER NO. 10.—Return relative thereto [ordered 4th August; *Mr. Caldwell*]; to be printed. [No. 318.]... 1573

CLOSURE OF DEBATE (STANDING ORDER NO. 26).—Return relative thereto [ordered 4th August; *Mr. Caldwell*]; to be printed. [No. 319.] 1573

DIVISIONS OF THE HOUSE.—Return relative thereto [ordered 4th August; *Mr. Caldwell*]; to be printed 1573

PUBLIC BILLS.—Return relative thereto [ordered 4th August; *Mr. Caldwell*]; to be printed 1573

PUBLIC PETITIONS.—Return relative thereto [ordered 4th August; *Mr. Caldwell*]; to be printed 1573

SELECT COMMITTEES.—Return relative thereto [ordered 4th August; *Mr. Caldwell*]; to be printed 1573

SITTINGS OF THE HOUSE.—Return relative thereto [ordered 4th August; *Mr. Caldwell*]; to be printed 1574

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (DAYS OCCUPIED BY GOVERNMENT AND BY PRIVATE MEMBERS). — Return relative thereto [ordered 4th August; *Mr. Caldwell*]; to be printed. [No. 320.]... 1574

PRIVATE BILLS AND PRIVATE BUSINESS.—Return relative thereto [ordered 4th August; *Mr. Caldwell*]; to be printed 1574

TRANSPORTS (SOUTH AFRICAN WAR).—Return ordered, "giving the names of all the transports hired for the conveyance of troops, stores, and material to South Africa in 1899, 1900, 1901, and 1902, and giving in a tabular form the following particulars:—(1) name of vessel; (2) owner; (3) broker, if any, through whom the vessel was chartered; (4) tonnage; (5) speed; (6) rate per ton per month; (7) minimum time for which engaged; (8) date of agreement; (9) date at which pay commenced; (10) date at which pay ceased; and (11) total sum paid by Government for hire and other charges."—(*Mr. Buchanan.*) 1574

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

LANCASHIRE AND YORKSHIRE RAILWAY—LEVEL CROSSINGS.—Question, Mr. Marshall Hall (Lancashire, Southport); Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour ... 1574

SHIPPING SUBSIDIES.—Question, Mr. Charles M'Arthur (Liverpool, Exchange); Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour 1575

EMIGRANTS FROM AND IMMIGRANTS INTO UNITED KINGDOM.—Question, Mr. D. A. Thomas (Merthyr Tydvil); Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour 1575

IMPORTS INTO CANADA FROM UNITED KINGDOM AND UNITED STATES.—Question, Mr. Alfred Davies (Carmarthen Boroughs); Answer, Mr. Gerald Balfour 1576

COST OF ELEMENTARY EDUCATION IN ENGLAND AND WALES.—Question, Mr. Alfred Davies; Answer, Mr. Ritchie... 1576

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Glasgow Post Office—Age Limit.—Question, Mr. James O'Connor (Wicklow, W.); Answer, Mr. Austen Chamberlain 1576

Glasgow and Govan Post Office.—Question, Mr. James O'Connor; Answer, Mr. Austen Chamberlain 1577

Betting Circulars.—Question, Mr. H. C. Richards (Finsbury, E.); Answer, Mr. Austen Chamberlain 1577

Post Office Pensions—Case of B. J. Foreman.—Question, Mr. Louis Sinclair (Essex, Romford); Answer, Mr. Austen Chamberlain 1578

Functions of Foreign Ministers of Commerce.—Question, Mr. Louis Sinclair; Answer, Lord Cranborne 1578

Foreign Drama and Opera (Subsidies) Return.—Question, Mr. Stuart Wortley (Sheffield, Hallam); Answer, Lord Cranborne 1578

Education Board for Wales.—Question, Mr. George Kenyon (Denbigh); Answer, Sir William Anson 1579

Board of Education—Teachers' Examinations.—Question, Mr. Norman (Wolverhampton, S.); Answer, Sir William Anson 1579

Charity Commissioners and Wilder's Charity.—Question, Major Seely (Isle of Wight); Answer, Mr. Griffith Boscawen 1580

Improved Landing Facilities at Connaloughly, Co. Kerry.—Question, Mr. Boland (Kerry, S.); Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1581

Disease of Foul Brood in Bees in Ireland.—Question, Mr. Boland; Answer, Mr. Wyndham 1582

Irish Resident Magistrates.—Question, Mr. Joseph Devlin (Kilkenny, N.); Answer, Br. Brodrick 1582

Workmen Employees of the War Office and Volunteer Camps.—Question, Mr. Keir Hardie (Merthyr Tydvil); Answer, Mr. Brodrick ... 1582

Population and Area of African Protectorates.—Question, Mr. Henry J. Wilson (Yorkshire, W.R., Holmfirth); Answer, Mr. J. Chamberlain ... 1583

Royal Commission on Militia and Volunteers.—Question, Lt.-Col. Pryce-Jones (Montgomery Boroughs); Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 1583

Fiscal Inquiry—Rents, Mining Royalties and Railway Rates.—Question, Mr. Keir Hardie; Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 1583

Shipbuilding Programme for Current Year.—Question, Mr. Duke (Plymouth); Answer, Mr. Arnold Forster 1584

Petition of Dockyard Employees.—Question, Mr. Reginald Lucas (Portsmouth); Answer, Mr. Arnold Forster 1584

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

South African War—Transport.—Question, Mr. Buchanan (Perthshire, E.); Answer, The Secretary to the Admiralty (Mr. Arnold-Forster, Belfast, W.) 1585

General De Wet's Guns.—Questions, Mr. Murphy (Kerry, E.); Answers, The Secretary of State for the Colonies (Mr. J. Chamberlain, Birmingham, W.) 1585

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INDIA AND THE TARIFF INQUIRY.—Question, Mr. Mansfield (Lincolnshire, Spalding); Answer, Secretary of State for India (Lord George Hamilton, Middlesex, Ealing) 1586

IMPRISONED CHINESE JOURNALISTS AT SHANGHAI.—Question, Mr. Buchanan; Answer, The Prime Minister and First Lord of the Treasury (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.) 1586

GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS AND THE PRESS.—Question, Mr. Whitley (Halifax); Answer, The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Ritchie, Croydon) ... 1586

RAILWAY RATES AND AGRICULTURAL PRODUCE.—Question, Capt. Bagot (Westmoreland, Kendal); Answer, Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes (Huntingdonshire, Ramsey) 1587

CHURCH OF ENGLAND SCHOOL MANAGERS.—Question, Mr. Mansfield; Answer, The Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Education (Sir William Anson, Oxford University) 1588

IMPRISONMENT FOR CONTEMPT OF COURT IN IRELAND—CASE OF MRS. MADIGAN.—Question, Mr. Wm. Redmond, Clare, E.; Answer, The Chief Secretary for Ireland (Mr. Wyndham, Dover) 1588

EVICTIONS IN COUNTY LIMERICK.—Questions, Mr. Lundon (Limerick, E.) and Mr. Delany (Queen's County, Ossory); Answers, Mr. Wyndham 1589

RETURNING OFFICERS' CHARGES.—Questions, Mr. Coghill (Stoke-upon-Trent); Answers, Mr. A. J. Balfour 1589

REDISTRIBUTION OF SEATS.—Question, Mr. Coghill; Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 1590

VOTERS' REGISTER.—Question, Mr. Lough (Islington, W.); Answer, Mr. A. J. Balfour 1590

THE SHIPPING AGREEMENTS.—Questions, Mr. Edmond Robertson (Dundee) and Mr. Bryce (Aberdeen, S.); Answers, Mr. A. J. Balfour 1591

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.—Questions, Mr. Bryce, Sir Charles Dilke (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean) and Mr. John Redmond (Waterford); Answers, Mr. A. J. Balfour and Sir A. Acland-Hood (Somersetshire, Wellington) ... 1591

Franchise and Removal of Women's Disabilities Bill.—Order for Second Reading [this day] read, and discharged. Bill withdrawn... ... 1592

Wages Boards Bill.—Order for Second Reading [this day] read, and discharged. Bill withdrawn 1592

Trade Unions and Trade Disputes Bill.—Order for Second Reading [this day] read, and discharged. Bill withdrawn 1592

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have agreed to—London Education Bill, with Amendments.

That they have passed a Bill intituled "An Act to amend Section 82 of the Bills of Exchange Act, 1882." [Bills of Exchange Act (1882) Amendment Bill [Lords].] 1592

Bills of Exchange Act (1882) Amendment Bill [Lords].—Read the first time; to be read a second time to-morrow, and to be printed. [Bill 313] 1593

Sugar Convention Bill.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. J. W. Lowther (Cumberland, Penrith) in the Chair.]

Clause 1.

Mr. Lough (Islington, W.)... 1593

Amendment proposed—

"In page 1, line 15, to leave out the word 'foreign.'"—(*Mr. Lough.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'foreign' stand part of the Clause."

The President of the Board of Trade (Mr. Gerald Balfour, Leeds, Central) 1596
Mr. Edmund Robertson (Dundee) 1597
Sir Charles Dilke (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean) 1598
Mr. Lawson Walton (Leeds, S.) 1599
Mr. Sydney Buxton (Tower Hamlets, Poplar) 1600
Mr. Lloyd-George (Carnarvon Boroughs) 1603
Mr. Bryce (Aberdeen, S.) 1603
Mr. Gerald Balfour 1604
Mr. Lawson Walton 1605
Mr. Whitley (Halifax) 1606
Mr. Lloyd-George 1606
Mr. Herbert Samuel (Yorkshire, Cleveland) 1606
The Solicitor-General (Sir Edward Carson, Dublin University) 1607
Mr. Lough 1608

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 147; Noes, 65. (Division List No. 213.)

Mr. Edmund Robertson 1611

Amendment proposed—

"In page 1, line 15, after the word 'country' to insert the words 'not being a party to the Convention.'"—(*Mr. Edmund Robertson.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. Gerald Balfour 1612
Mr. Ure (Linlithgowshire) 1612
Mr. Lough 1613
Mr. Sydney Buxton 1615

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 68; Noes, 157. (Division List No. 214.)

Mr. Kearley (Devonport) 1619

Amendment proposed—

"In page 1, line 16, after the word 'sugars,' to insert the words 'or sugared goods.'"—(*Mr. Kearley.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. Gerald Balfour 1620
Mr. Edmund Robertson 1620
Mr. Lawson Walton 1622
Sir Samuel Hoare (Norwich) 1624
Mr. Bryce 1624
Mr. Lloyd-George 1625
Mr. Gibson Bowles (Lynn Regis) 1626
Sir Charles Dilke 1627
Mr. Sydney Buxton 1629
Mr. Gerald Balfour 1631
Mr. Robson (South Shields) 1633
Mr. Harwood (Bolton) 1634
Mr. Gibson Bowles 1635
Mr. Emmott (Oldham) 1636
Sir John Gorst (Cambridge University) 1637
Sir Charles Dilke 1638
Mr. Lough 1639
The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Ritchie, Croydon) 1640
Mr. Butcher (York) 1641
Mr. Kearley 1641
Mr. Middlemore (Birmingham, N.) 1642
Mr. Walter Palmer (Salisbury) 1643
Mr. Pierpoint (Warrington) 1644
Mr. Markham (Nottinghamshire, Mansfield) 1644
Mr. Gibson Bowles 1645
Mr. Asquith (Fifeshire, E.) 1646

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

Question put, "That the Question be now put."

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 161; Noes, 90. (Division List No. 215.)

Question put accordingly.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 88; Noes, 156. (Division List No. 216.)

Committee report Progress; to sit again this evening.

EVENING SITTING.

Sugar Convention Bill.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[MR. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith) in the Chair.]

Clause 1.

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Mr. Ure 1654

Amendment proposed—

"In page 1, line 19, to leave out from the word 'Kingdom,' to the end of line 21."—(*Mr. Ure.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the clause."

Mr. Gerald Balfour 1655
Mr. Edmund Robertson 1655
Mr. Gibson Bowles 1657
Mr. Lough 1657
Mr. Bryce 1658
Mr. Gerald Balfour 1658

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 114; Noes, 54. (Division List No. 217.)

Mr. Edmund Robertson 1659

Amendment proposed—

"In page 1, line 21, after the word 'Convention,' to insert the words 'and such order shall be in force until the permanent Commission reports that such bounty is no longer granted in such foreign country.'"—(*Mr. Edmund Robertson.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. Gibson Bowles 1661
Mr. Sydney Buxton 1661
Mr. Lawson Walton 1661
Mr. Edmund Robertson 1662

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Mr. Kearley 1662

Amendment proposed—

"In page 1, line 21, at end, to insert the words 'provided that any prohibition order issued against any non-signatory State found to be giving a bounty after the Convention comes into force shall take effect in two months from the date of issue of such order.'"—(*Mr. Kearley.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. Lough... 1663
Mr. Kearley 1663

Amendment, as amended, by leave, withdrawn.

Mr. Lough... 1664

Amendment proposed—

"In page 1, line 22, to leave out Sub-section (2)."—(*Mr. Lough.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

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Mr. Ritchie 1665
Mr. Sydney Buxton 1666
Mr. Gibson Bowles 1666
Mr. Robson 1667
Mr. Kearley 1668
Mr. Ritchie 1668
Mr. Lawson Walton 1668
Mr. Nussey (Pontefract) 1669
Mr. Runciman (Dewsbury) 1669
Mr. Bryce 1670
Mr. Lough... 1670
Sir John Gorst 1671
Mr. Ritchie 1672

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 171 ; Noes, 76. (Division List, No. 218.)

Amendment proposed—

"In page 2, line 2, to leave out the words 'whether in transit or otherwise,' and insert the words 'except sugar in transit.'"—(*Mr. Lough.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Clause."

Sir Charles Dilke 1675
Mr. Gibson Bowles 1675
Mr. Bryce 1675
Mr. Runciman 1676
Sir Charles Dilke 1676
Mr. Lawson Walton 1677
Mr. Lough... 1677
Mr. Sydney Buxton 1678
Mr. Robson 1678
Mr. Whitley 1679
Mr. Gerald Balfour 1680

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 168 ; Noes, 70. (Division List No. 219.)

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question, 'That Clause 1 stand part of the Bill' be now put."

Question put, "That the Question, 'That Clause 1 stand part of the Bill' be now put."

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 156 ; Noes, 65. (Division List No. 220.)

Question put accordingly, "That Clause 1 stand part of the Bill."

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 154 ; Noes, 65. (Division List No. 221.)

Clause 2.

Sir Charles Dilke 1687

Amendment proposed—

"In page 2, line 3, to leave out the words 'in the United Kingdom.'"—(*Sir Charles Dilke.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the clause."

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Sir Charles Dilke 1689
Mr. Ritchie... 1689

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Mr. Lough 1690

Amendment proposed—

"In page 2, line 40, to leave out the word 'fifty' and insert the words 'five hundred.'"—(*Mr. Lough.*)

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Mr. Lough 1690
Mr. Robson... 1691
Mr. Ritchie... 1691
Mr. Bryce 1692
Mr. Mansfield (*Lincolnshire, Spalding*) 1692
Mr. Levy (*Leicestershire, Loughborough*) 1692
Mr. Whitley 1692
Mr. Runciman 1693

Motion made, and Question put, "That the clause stand part of the Bill."

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 144; Noes, 59. (Division List No. 222.)

Clause 3.

Mr. Robson... 1696
Mr. Lough 1698

Question put, "That the clause stand part of the Bill."

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 135; Noes, 50. (Division List No. 223.)

Clause 4.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 3, line 11, to leave out the word 'Convention,' and insert the words 'supply limitation.'"—(*Mr. Broadhurst.*)
Question proposed, "That the word 'Convention' stand part of the clause."

Mr. Runciman 1702

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 133; Noes, 51. (Division List No. 224.)

Motion made, and Question put, "That the clause stand part of the Bill."

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 133; Noes, 50. (Division List No. 225.)

Preamble.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this be the preamble of the Bill."

Question put.

The Committee divided; Ayes, 134; Noes, 50. (Division List No. 226.)

Motion made, and Question put, "That the Chairman do report the Bill, without Amendment, to the House."

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 124 ; Noes, 41. (Division List No. 227.)

Bill reported, without Amendment ; to be read the third time to-morrow.

Railways (Electrical Power) Bill.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith) in the Chair.]

Clause 1.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 1, line 6, after the word 'may,' to insert the words 'upon the application of a railway company.'"—(*Mr. Loder.*)

Amendment agreed to.

Mr. J. H. Lewis (*Flint Boroughs*) 1710

Amendment proposed—

"In page 1, to leave out lines 22 to 24, inclusive."—(*Mr. J. H. Lewis.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the clause."

The Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade (*Mr. Bonar Law, Glasgow, Blackfriars*) 1711

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Clause 1, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 2.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 2, line 17, after the word 'Committee,' to insert the words 'or if the two Houses of Parliament think fit so to order to a Joint Committee of those Houses.'"—(*Mr. Caldwell.*)

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 2, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 3 withdrawn.

Clause 4.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 2, line 41, after the word 'made,' to insert the words 'by the Council of any County, any local authority, or other person.'"—(*Mr. Gerald Balfour.*)

Amendment agreed to.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 3, line 2, at end of line, to insert the words 'and if after consideration the Board decide that the objection should be upheld, the Board shall not make the Order or shall modify the Order so as to remove the objection.'"—(*Mr. Gerald Balfour.*)

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 4, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 5.

Mr. Markham (Nottinghamshire, Mansfield) 1712
Mr. Bonar Law 1712

Clause 5 agreed to.

Clause 6.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 3, line 25, to leave out the word 'Commission,' and insert the words 'and Canal Commissioners.'"—(*Mr. Gerald Balfour.*)

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 6, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 7 agreed to.

Bill reported; as amended, to be considered to-morrow.

Patriotic Fund Bill.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith) in the Chair.]

Schedule 1.

Mr. Lough (Islington, W.)... 1712

Amendment proposed—

"In page 3, line 4, to leave out Sub-section 1."—(*Mr. Lough.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the schedule."

The Civil Lord of the Admiralty (Mr. Pretyman, Suffolk, Woodbridge) ... 1713

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Sir Arthur Hayter (Walsall) 1713

Amendment proposed—

"In page 3, line 8, after the word 'members' to insert the words '(b) The lords lieutenant of counties.'"—(*Sir Arthur Hayter.*)

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Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. Kearley (Devonport) 1713
Mr. Hayes Fisher (Fulham) 1714
Sir Charles Dilke (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean) 1714
Lord Edmund Talbot (Sussex, Chichester) 1714
Mr. Stopford Sackville (Northamptonshire, N.) 1715
Mr. Pretyman 1715

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 103 ; Noes, 29. (Division List No. 228.)

Mr. Shackleton (Lancashire, Clitheroe) 1717

Amendment proposed—

"In page 4, line 15, after the word 'county' to insert the words 'and municipal.'"—(*Mr. Shackleton.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. Pretyman 1717

Question put, and negatived.

Bill reported; as amended, to be considered to-morrow.

PUBLIC WORKS LOANS [REMISSION OF DEBT].—Resolution reported, "That it is expedient to authorise the remission of a certain debt due to the Public Works Loan Commissioners by the Port Seton Harbour Commissioners, in pursuance of any Act of the present session relating to Local Loans."

Resolution agreed to 1718

Public Works Loans Bill.—Considered in Committee, and reported, without Amendment; to be read the third time to-morrow 1718

Ecclesiastical Commissioners Bill [LORDS].—Order for Second Reading read, and discharged; Bill withdrawn 1718

Bishoprics of Southwark and Birmingham Bill [LORDS].—Order for Second Reading read, and discharged. Bill withdrawn 1718

Isle of Man (Customs) Bill.—Read a second time, and committed for to-morrow 1718

Charitable Loan Societies (Ireland) Bill.—Order for Second Reading read, and discharged. Bill withdrawn 1718

Ireland Development Grant Bill.—Read the third time, and passed ... 1718

Congested Districts (Scotland) (No. 2) Bill.—Order for Second Reading read, and discharged: Bill withdrawn 1718

Marriage Legislation Bill.—Considered in Committee, and reported; Bill, as reported; Bill, as amended, to be considered this day 1719

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POST OFFICE (CONTRACT FOR ACCELERATED MAIL SERVICE TO AND FROM IRELAND *via* CARLISLE, STRANRAER, AND LARNE).—Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Question [3rd August]. "That the contract, dated the 8th day of November, 1902, with the Glasgow and South Western Railway Company, the Portpatrick and Wigtownshire Joint Committee and the Belfast and Northern Counties Railway Company, for an Accelerated Mail Service to and from Ireland via Carlisle, Stranraer, and Larne, printed in Parliamentary Paper, No. 56, of Session 1903, be approved."—(*Mr. Elliot.*)

Question again proposed: Debate resumed.

Question put, and agreed to 1719

MOTOR-CARS (EXCISE DUTY).

Considered in Committee

(In the Committee.)

Resolved, That it is expedient to authorise the imposition of an Excise duty on persons employed as drivers on motor-cars of the same amount as is payable on male servants, in pursuance of any Act of the present session to amend The Locomotives on Highways Act, 1896.—(*Mr. Walter Long.*)

Resolution to be reported to-morrow 1720

Whereupon in pursuance of the Order of the House of the 28th day of July, Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House without Question put.

Adjourned at ten minutes after Three o'clock, a.m.

END OF TABLE OF CONTENTS TO VOLUME CXXVI.

THE

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(*AUTHORISED EDITION*)

IN THE

FOURTH SESSION OF THE *TWENTY-SEVENTH PARLIAMENT* OF THE
UNITED KINGDOM OF *GREAT BRITAIN* AND *IRELAND*, IN THE
THIRD YEAR OF THE REIGN OF

HIS MAJESTY KING EDWARD VII.

NINTH VOLUME OF SESSION.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Thursday, 23rd July, 1903.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Strabane and Letterkenny Railway Bill. Several witnesses ordered to attend the Select Committee.

London County Council (Tramways and Improvements) Bill. The King's consent signified; and Bill reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments.

London County Council (Money) Bill; Baker Street and Waterloo Railway (Extension of Time) Bill; South Shields Corporation Bill. Reported, with Amendments.

Erith Tramways and Improvement Bill. Report from the Select Committee, That the Committee had not proceeded with the consideration of the Bill, no parties having appeared in opposition thereto; read, and ordered to lie on the Table: The orders made on the ninth instant and Friday last discharged; and Bill committed for Tuesday next.

Kingston-upon-Hull Corporation Bill. Report from the Select Committee, That the Committee had not proceeded with the consideration of the Bill, no parties having appeared in opposition thereto; read, and ordered to lie on the Table: The orders made on the 14th instant and Friday last discharged; and Bill committed for Tuesday next.

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 8.) Bill. Report from the Select Committee, That the Committee had not proceeded with the consideration of the Bill, the Committee having found that the petitioners had no *locus standi* before them; read, and ordered to lie on the Table; the orders made on the 7th instant and Friday last discharged; and Bill committed to a Committee of the Whole House.

Alexandra Park and Palace Bill; Croydon and District Electric Tramways Bill. Moved, That the order made on the 16th day of March last, "That no Private Bill brought from the House of

Commons shall be read a second time after the 18th day of June next," be dispensed with, and that the Bills be now read 2ª, agreed to; Bills read 2ª accordingly, and committed.

Blackheath and Greenwich District Electric Light Bill. Read 3ª, and passed.

Watford and Edgware Railway Bill. Read 3ª, with the Amendments, and passed, and returned to the Commons.

London County Council (General Powers) Bill. Read 3ª, with the Amendments; further Amendments made; Bill passed, and returned to the Commons.

London United Tramways Bill; London, Tilbury, and Southend Railway Bill; Great Northern, Piccadilly, and Brompton Railway (Various Powers) Bill. Read 3ª, with the Amendments, and passed, and returned to the Commons.

Harrow Road and Paddington Tramways Bill. Read 3ª, with the Amendments, and passed, and returned to the Commons.

Irish Land Bill; London Education Bill; Licensing Acts (Scotland) Consolidation and Amendment Bill. Brought from the Commons.

Lochnell Estates Bill [H.L.]. Returned from the Commons agreed to.

Gas Orders Confirmation (No. 2) Bill [H.L.]. Returned from the Commons agreed to, with Amendments.

Derby Gas Bill [H.L.]; Dudley, Stourbridge, and District Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Poole and District Electric Traction Bill [H.L.]; Tynemouth and District Tramways Bill [H.L.]. Returned from the Commons agreed to, with Amendments; the said Amendments considered, and agreed to.

Pier and Harbour Provisional Orders (No. 5) Bill. Returned from the Commons, with the Amendment agreed to.

Middlesbrough Corporation Bill. Returned from the Commons, with the Amendments agreed to.

Plymouth Corporation Bill. Report from the Select Committee, That the promoters do not intend to proceed further with the Bill: Ordered, that the Bill be not further proceeded with.

Drainage and Improvement of Lands (Ireland) Provisional Order Bill; Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill; Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 7) Bill. Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 13) Bill. Read 3ª (according to Order), and passed.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

AFRICA No. 9 (1903).

Memorandum showing position of the four African Protectorates administered by the Foreign Office in June, 1903, arranged in chronological order of date of administration.

WEST INDIES.

Report on Excise Restrictions in force in the West Indies and British Guiana in relation to a proposal to sanction the payment of such an allowance on export of rum as shall compensate the distillers in those colonies for additional outlay caused by Excise restrictions.

ORDNANCE SURVEY.

Report of the progress of the Ordnance Survey, to the 31st March, 1903.

AGRARIAN OUTRAGES (IRELAND).

Return for the Quarter ended 30th June, 1903. Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

FORESHORES.

Treasury Minute, dated 21st July, 1903, directing the application of moneys received by the Board of Trade, in the year ended 31st March, 1903, in respect of the rights and interests of the Crown in the foreshores of the United Kingdom.

POLICE ACT, 1890.

Correspondence relative to the refusal of the Secretary of State's certificate under Section 17 (2) of the Act to the River Tyne Police Force, for the year ended 29th September, 1902.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

MUNICIPAL TRADING.

Report from the Joint Committee (with the proceedings of the Committee) made, and to be printed. (No. 172)

MARINE STORE DEALERS (IRELAND) BILL.

Reported from the Standing Committee without further amendment; The Report of the Amendments made in Committee of the Whole House to be received To-morrow.

MOTOR CARS BILL [H.L.].

Reported from the Standing Committee with further amendments: The Report of the Amendments made in Committee of the Whole House, and by the Standing Committee, to be received To-morrow; and the Bill to be printed as amended. (No. 173.)

COUNTY COURTS JURISDICTION EXTENSION BILL.

House in Committee (According to Order).

*THE LORD CHANCELLOR (The Earl of HALSBURY): I think it would be more convenient that any Amendments I have to move on this Bill should be referred to the Standing Committee. With one exception the Amendments which I intend to propose are upon questions of law, and I therefore think it would be more convenient if I postponed them to the Standing Committee.

Bill reported without Amendment; and re-committed to the Standing Committee.

MILITARY LANDS BILL.

On the Motion to go into Committee,

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (The Earl of HARDWICKE) said: My Lords, before we go into Committee I should like to say a few words with reference to the remarks which were made upon this Bill by my noble friend the Chairman of Committees the other day. On that occasion I gave an undertaking to look into the matter to which he took exception. The noble Earl pointed out that the Bill would enable a County Council to borrow money in order to pay for the hire of land, and he objected to that power. I propose, when the House is in Committee, to move an Amendment which will make it clear that the money that is to be borrowed is only to be in the nature of capital expenditure. I have taken this opportunity of mentioning this matter in order to give the noble Earl the Chairman of Committees an opportunity of expressing his views before the House goes into Committee, when he will not have that opportunity.

THE CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES (The Earl of MORLEY): I am much obliged to my noble friend for his courtesy in telling me the nature of the Amendment which he proposes to move when the House goes into Committee on this Bill. I may say that the Amendment entirely satisfies the objection I raised, and I think it will be a great improvement to the Bill.

House in Committee (according to Order).

Clause 1.

THE EARL OF HARDWICKE: The last words of Clause 1, if the Amendment which I am about to move is agreed to, will read—

> "And the payment of those expenses, so far as they are in the nature of capital expenditure shall accordingly be a purpose for which the Council may borrow."

Amendment moved—

> "In Clause 1, line 13, after the word 'expenses,' to insert the words, 'so far as they are in the nature of capital expenditure.'"—(*The Earl of Hardwicke.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Clause 1, as amended, agreed to.

Remaining clause agreed to, and Bill re-committed to the Standing Committee; and to be printed as amended.

THE SUPERANNUATION OF LAW CLERKS

*Lord MONKSWELL, who had given notice—"To call attention to the Report of the Ridley Commission as to superannuation; to ask the Lord Chancellor whether he proposes to take any steps to apply the scheme of superannuation obtaining in the Civil Service, or any other scheme of superannuation, to the law clerks serving in the several divisions of the High Court; and to move for a Return of the total number of such clerks, giving the number, ages, salaries, and length of service of such clerks as are over the age of sixty," said —My Lords, I am very sorry to stand, even for a few minutes, between this House and the interesting debate to which we are about to listen, and my remarks will be as short as I can reasonably make them. In moving the Motion that stands in my name, I have to say, in the first place, that my most grateful thanks are due to the noble and learned Earl on the Woolsack for his courtesy in giving me information which is not accessible to the public. I hope I need not assure the House that in bringing forward this Motion I am not in any way actuated by a spirit of hostility to the noble and learned Earl. It is a perfectly friendly Motion. The noble Earl is, of course, entitled to his own opinion with regard to superannuation. He may agree, or he may not agree, with the principle of compulsory superannuation as applied either to the Civil Service or to the law clerks; but I do say that the time has now come for the noble and learned Earl, and for the other Judges who are responsible for the efficiency of the Law Offices, to state their views.

The Ridley Commission, to which I have directed your Lordships' attention, reported in September, 1888, and from that time to this, with two exceptions, there has been absolutely no authoritative exposition by the Judges of their views with regard to this important question of the superannuation of law clerks; although they have been very often pressed to give their views. The late Lord Herschell expressed a view in favour of a scheme of superannuation being applied to some, at all events, of the law clerks, and Sir Francis Jeune is very enthusiastic indeed in the same direction. But with those two exceptions, for fifteen years the Judges have been asked for their opinion by the Treasury and by private people, and so far they have not given it. The authority in support of my view is very great indeed. There is the authority not of one, but of two, Royal Commissions, and the action of the Treasury enthusiastically endorsing the finding of those Royal Commissions; and I have not heard any reason stated why the great majority of the law clerks should be treated differently in this matter from the Civil Service. I shall not weary your Lordships with any views of my own on the subject. I shall content myself with making an extract from the Treasury Minute respecting the Order in Council of 15th August, 1890, which carried into effect, with regard to superannuation in the Civil Service, the recommendations of the Ridley Commission. The Treasury Minute says that—

> "The question of compulsory retirement was considered by the Royal Commission of 1857 on Civil Service Superannuation, and they suggested sixty-five years of age as a fit period at which retirement might be made compulsory. This regulation had, in the opinion of the Commissioners, the great advantage that it relieved heads of Departments of the invidious and painful duty of suggesting to a meritorious public servant that his powers were beginning to fail. If, in special instances, long services were accompanied by undiminished power of usefulness, it might be left to heads of Departments to perform the more agreeable task of inviting a particular officer to continue in his post. The Commissioners, presided over by Sir M. White Ridley, expressed in their second Report their concurrence with the Commissioners of 1857 'That it is absolutely essential to fix an age for compulsory retirement.' They suggested 65 as the age. 'There should be no exception,' the Commissioners continue, 'to this rule, except in the case of certain scheduled offices in which the officer, if asked by the Government to do so, might be allowed to extend his services for a further period never exceeding five years. It should be clearly understood that at the age of 60 a man may be required to retire by the head of his Department upon such pension as by the length of his service he is qualified to receive."

The Minute goes on to say—

> "It will be seen that Clause 10 of the Order in Council gives effect to the recommendations of the Royal Commissioners, which may be said to represent the most recent utterance of competent opinion. My Lords entertain no doubt of the wisdom of the regulation as laid down by the Order in Council."

It appears to me that the reasons given in this Minute appeal to one as common sense. A great deal has happened since

1890. This system of superannuation in the Civil Service has been going on for thirteen years. I can quite understand the noble and learned Earl on the Woolsack and the other Judges saying that they did not care to extend this system of superannuation to the law clerks until they had seen how it worked in the Civil Service, but we have now had thirteen years experience of how this system works in the Civil Service, and I do not think there is a man who wishes to go back to the old system.

With regard to the application of the Civil Service system to the law clerks, on that matter a distinction has been drawn by the Judges. They say that the law clerks may be divided into two classes—judicial clerks and non-judicial clerks; that is, clerks who perform judicial work, and clerks who do not. It is perfectly clear that when the Order in Council was issued it was supposed at the time that that Order not only ought to include the law clerks, but did, in point of fact, include them; and that appears very clear from a Memorandum to a Bill brought in by Lord Herschell in the year 1893 dealing, among other things, with the question of the retirement of law clerks. He puts the arguments of the Judges, and also his own views, in the Memorandum, and I think it would be desirable that I should read a short extract from the Memorandum. The Memorandum states:

> "Doubts have recently been raised whether Orders in Council regulating the Civil Service apply to the legal departments."

Therefore, clearly, before 1893, no doubt at all existed in the minds of the Treasury on this point.

*THE LORD CHANCELLOR: I think I ought to tell the noble Lord that that was the view of the Treasury. It was not the view either of Lord Herschell or of myself.

*LORD MONKSWELL: I quite understand that.

*THE LORD CHANCELLOR: But I think the noble Lord was reading it as if it had the concurrence of Lord Herschell.

*LORD MONKSWELL: I apologise if that is the case. Lord Herschell, in the Memorandum to his Bill, goes on to say—

> "The organisation, qualifications, duties and requirements in those (the law) departments are so materially different from those in the ordinary branches of the Civil Service that great confusion would follow any such application; but, at the same time, there are recommendations in the recent Report of the Royal Commission on Civil Establishments which ought not to be disregarded in the legal departments if they are thought right to be enforced in other public offices. The Bill, therefore, declares that the offices of the Supreme Court shall be regulated by Orders of the Lord Chancellor, with the consent as far as expenditure is concerned of the Treasury; and Orders based on similar principles to those recently laid down for the Civil Service are intended to be issued as soon as the power to make such Orders is given."

Therefore I think I am justified in saying that Lord Herschell was, at all events, in favour of some of these clerks being compulsorily retired. Lord Herschell brought in another Bill dealing with the same subject in 1895, and on May 16, 1895, a Committee of five Judges reported on this Bill. The Report dealt with the proposal to extend the patronage of the Lord Chancellor, and with the compulsory retirement of law clerks. The patronage proposals were discussed at considerable length, and I may say with some heat, and the Committee unanimously denounced the application of an age limit to judicial clerks. It is not wonderful that His Majesty's Judges should take a great interest in these matters; but the unfortunate part is that their interest seems to have stopped there, because, although they had been asked for five years by the Treasury and by other people to express some opinion as to whether the great body of law clerks should or should not be compulsorily retired on reaching a certain age, they express no opinion in the matter. They give it the go-by. They do not make any suggestion that they cannot agree. From all one can read in the Report, they did not take the matter into their consideration at all. One of the Judges on this Committee was the President of the Probate Division, Sir Francis Jeune, who is, and always has been, strongly in favour of an age limit for a great majority of law clerks. Therefore I suppose that, although the Report does not say so, the subject was considered, and that the reason they did not express an opinion was that that opinion was very much divided.

On April 17, 1901, Sir Francis Jeune wrote to Admiral Field, who took up this matter in the House of Commons, a letter. The concluding paragraph of his letter reads as follows—

> "Since the Ridley Commission the case for superannuation is overwhelming, and the absence of it leaves very many of the clerks in the Probate Registry in a very sad position. I have by personal influence obtained a good many resignations from clerks who were really beyond their work, and were wise enough and just enough to recognise the fact. But my power in that way is, of course, very limited, and beyond question there should be a rule working automatically."

The Judges, as I have said, unanimously agreed that judicial clerks ought to be exempted from age retirement. So far as my personal opinion is concerned, I cannot entirely agree with them. But there is a distinction, no doubt, between judicial and other clerks, and one that ought to be recognised, but it appears to me that it ought to be recognised in the way that it is recognised in the Civil Service. In the Civil Service, as well as with law clerks, there are persons who do not enter young, but in middle life, with great professional experience, but they are compelled to retire at sixty-five. The only difference is that a certain number of years are added to their service in calculating their pensions. Therefore I think the distinct on that has been made with regard to law clerks is one that will hardly hold water; but as the Judges are unanimously against me I will not press my opinion on that matter.

I desire to say that this is not a mere sentimental grievance; it is a very real grievance. Admiral Field moved for a Return in the House of Commons very similar to the Return I am moving for to day, and that Return showed that in July, 1900, there were twenty-five clerks between the ages of sixty-five and seventy-five with from thirty-two to fifty-four years service, and six clerks of over twenty years seniority serving in the same class and on the same pay as at the time of entering, with ages varying from forty to seventy-one years. I asked one of the Judges the other day whether that state of things had been at all ameliorated, and he said it was just as bad now as in 1900. I do not doubt for a single instant that the noble and learned Earl and the other Judges concerned do the best they can to find out what is going on in these law offices; but they cannot find out everything that is going on. What the junior clerks say is, that they have a double grievance, that they are compelled to do the work of incompetent seniors and promotion is blocked. It is said that vested interests stand in the way of reform. I leave that question to be dealt with by noble and learned Lords in this House. I would only point out this—that in the Army and Navy the age limit is applied to persons who joined before the limit was imposed, so that it would seem, with regard to certain persons at all events, the question of vested interests is not entertained. So far as I am concerned, I shall be perfectly satisfied if the Lord Chancellor gives his adhesion to the general principle of superannuation with regard to non-judicial clerks, and will promise to take at once such steps as he thinks advisable to carry his views into effect. In addition to the Papers I have moved for, I should like to ask the noble and learned Earl on the Woolsack whether he would be inclined to grant me certain correspondence that has taken place between the Lord Chancellor and the Treasury with regard to this question of superannuation.

Moved, "That there be laid before the House a Return of the total number of law clerks serving in the several divisions of the High Court, giving the number, ages, salaries, and length of service of such clerks as are over the age of 60; and all correspondence passing between the Lord Chancellor and the Treasury with respect to the superannuation of the law clerks serving in the several divisions of the High Court."—(*Lord Monkswell.*)

THE LORD CHIEF JUSTICE (Lord ALVERSTONE): My Lords, before the noble and learned Earl on the Woolsack replies, I should like to say a few words upon this subject. Speaking as head of the King's Bench Division, I should be extremely sorry to see a hard and fast rule laid down, as indicated in the Motion, that there should be retirement at the age of 60.

*LORD MONKSWELL: I suggested that the Civil Service rule should apply—namely, that there should be compulsory retirement at 65, with the possibility of having a few years added, and optional retirement at 60.

*LORD ALVERSTONE: As I say, I should be sorry to see any hard and fast rule laid down. In all probability the difficulty has arisen in the past because there has not been sufficient consideration of individual cases. I think that in some cases it might be well that the power which now exists should be more freely exercised, but there is another aspect of the case which has been overlooked, and that is the hardship that would ensue if this proposal were carried out. In the King's Bench Division, with some eighty clerks, there are only nine first-class clerks. The consequence is that only one in nine second-class clerks ever can become a first class clerk. Therefore, if you are going to have a hard and fast rule of retirement, you must retire men who are second class clerks on a comparatively small pension, although they have done a great number of years service. If anything of the kind is established there ought to be some modification of the rule as to the salaries which the second class clerks receive. With regard to the present working of the office the noble Lord has suggested that there are cases in which second class or lower class clerks have had to do the work of their seniors, because the latter are incompetent. Speaking for the King's Bench Division, I can state that there is no justification whatever for that statement. If the noble Lord suggests that in regard to that Division there has been any necessity for calling upon lower clerks to do the work of the seniors, because of their incapacity through age or other causes, I can assure him that, to the best of my information, he is absolutely mistaken. I would remind the noble Lord that the present state of the office is peculiar. We have reduced the staff at the Law Courts very materially during the last fifteen or twenty years, and the slow promotion is due to the large reduction made in first class clerks. Until things right themselves and get into what I may call the normal state, the usual rate of promotion will not be restored. I would ask your Lordships to pause before endorsing the theory that for clerks exercising such duties there should be this compulsory age retirement. I feel that the complaint arises to a certain extent from the scale of pay and the unavoidable delay in promotion. It may be said that they go into the office knowing what the salary is, and what the expectations are; but that does not prevent the hardship being felt, when the second class clerks are nearly eight or nine times as numerous as the first class clerks. In my Division, notwithstanding the slow promotion, the clerks have worked extremely well, and I desire to take this opportunity of publicly stating my high appreciation of the way in which they have done their work. Whatever view my noble and learned friend on the Woolsack may take with regard to this matter, speaking for myself I should be very sorry to see a hard and fast rule laid down.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR: We all desire to further the public interest in this matter. I very much deprecate the notion that any body of junior clerks or junior *employés* have the right to start an inquiry on this subject on the ground that they are entitled to promotion. They may be entitled to promotion in due course, but I protest against that notion because I think it would be mischievous to the public service. In the first place let me deal with what the noble Lord said with reference to the Ridley Commission. I am sorry the noble Viscount is not here who presided over that Commission, because I know what his views are. It is an entire mistake to suppose that the Ridley Commission was ever intended to apply to the judicial body at all. It did not take a single witness from that body, but, apart from that question, which, after all, is not a very important one, I am not fascinated with the age rule, even as it has been accepted during its thirteen years trial. It has frequently happened that Civil servants, who have been retired under the age rule upon the ground, and only upon the ground, that they are unfit any longer to perform their duties, have immediately found employment at high salaries in commercial establishments to the great loss of the public, who are deprived of services to which they were entitled.

My noble and learned friend the Lord Chief Justice has answered for the Division with which he is connected. I can assure the noble Lord that, with regard to the Division of which I am the head, it is not in the smallest degree true to say that the junior officers are employed more than they should be by reason of their seniors being incompetent. Do not let it be supposed that we do not know what goes on. I can assure the noble Lord that if there is any cause for complaint, there is no reluctance to make it. I get reports from time to time of the conduct of the officers, and there is not the smallest ground for supposing that there is any complaint on the ground stated. With the Lord Chief Justice I must bear testimony to the efficient way in which the duties are performed, and they are discharged without complaint of undue pressure. Of course these clerks, like other people, may think that their services are not adequately requited, and with respect to some of them I should be disposed to agree with that view. But, with reference to the question raised, I may say that I have never heard any complaint such as the noble Lord has suggested, and I do not think there is any ground at all for it.

I personally should have no objection to a rule of retirement for non-judicial clerks, but the House of Commons refused to pass the necessary Bill; and if there is anything to be done in that direction the noble Lord should bring in a Bill for the purpose. I do not believe I have the power to do it without an Act of Parliament. Some of the learned persons who are associated with me in this matter are of opinion that we have this power, and some certainly think we have not; and in that divided state of authority I certainly should not think of acting without the sanction of an Act of Parliament. But, as I have said, personally I should have no objection to any Bill which provided that the persons who are not invested with any judicial authority should be retired at the age of sixty-five. There are some positions—such as that of the Chancery Masters—which cannot be held without considerable professional experience, and it would be absurd to retire men in those positions at the age of sixty-five.

With regard to the proposal that the period should be extended at the suggestion of the Treasury, if there is one thing more objectionable than another, it is that any Government Department should have the power to affect the future of any judicial person. The power is possessed by me, in common with other heads of Departments, to remove any person unable to perform his duties, and I have more than once exercised that power. It is quite a mistake to suppose that there is no such power. To the best of my ability I will continue to exercise it, and anybody in my position must exercise it. I do not think on a single occasion during the fifteen years I have had to exercise that power it has been necessary to do it by order. It has been sufficient to intimate that the time has arrived when they had better retire, and they have always acted upon that. I very much object to the notion that they should be compelled to retire, because the public would thereby be deprived of services which are extremely valuable. In these circumstances, I cannot give the noble Lord any such assurance as he asks from me. With reference to the Return, if the noble Lord presses for it I shall place no impediment in the way of its being given. If, as he says, there are a number of officers in the Probate Division who are unfit to discharge their duties, the President of the Probate Court has not exercised the power which I have been called upon to exercise, but has allowed the Court to remain in a condition in which it ought not to remain. But speaking for my own Division no such state of affairs exists.

*LORD MONKSWELL: Will the noble and learned Earl give me the correspondence between the Treasury and the Lord Chancellor, which I think might be interesting?

*THE LORD CHANCELLOR: So far as I am concerned I have no correspondence, and I can have no objection to my predecessor's correspondence being given.

*LORD MONKSWELL: The noble and learned Earl on the Woolsack goes further with me than the Lord Chief Justice, and I am glad to find that he is in favour of some age for the retirement of clerks who do not exercise any judicial function. But I would suggest that a Bill on the subject would come very much better from him than from me.

On Question, Motion agreed to.

FISCAL POLICY—THE BIRMINGHAM LEAFLETS.

*The Earl of LYTTON, who had given notice "To call attention to certain publications of the Tariff Committee of the Birmingham Liberal Unionist Association, and to ask the Lord President of the Council whether these publications are issued with the knowledge and approval of the Secretary of State for the Colonies; whether what is described in them as 'the Chamberlain policy' and 'the fiscal policy of Mr. Chamberlain' is the policy of the Government; if so, when this policy will be expounded in Parliament," said: My Lords, however conscious I may be of my own inability to command your Lordships' attention on the subject with which this Question deals, I do not think I need offer any apology for asking this House to consider one feature of that great political question which at this moment is absorbing so large a share of public attention in the country. Your Lordships will remember that a request was made a few days ago in a quarter by no means hostile to the Government for an opportunity to discuss the fiscal policy of this country in the House of Commons. That request was refused, and, whatever the ground may have been for that refusal, we all know that the House of Commons, unlike your Lordships' House, is a very busy place; and the Prime Minister, at any rate, gave it as his opinion that no useful purpose could be served by interrupting the course of business in the House of Commons by discussing this important question at the present moment.

A few days later an attempt was made to obtain discussion in another quarter. A request was sent to the Lord Mayor for the use of the Mansion House for the purpose of holding a large meeting, but the Lord Mayor was of the same opinion as the Prime Minister, and thought that no useful purpose could be served by granting the request—or, at any rate, that the question was not of a character which lent itself to discussion in that place. No doubt the reasons given on both those occasions were perfectly adequate; but it comes, then, to this, that there is only one Chamber, only one Assembly in this country at the present moment, in which this matter can have free and full discussion, and that is your Lordships' House. We, my Lords, are happily not hampered by any congestion of business, and our debates are not interfered with by any consideration either of prejudice or of procedure, and therefore it is to the House of Lords at this moment that the country is looking for full comment upon the extraordinary political situation which has been created. For, my Lords, it is an extraordinary political situation. It is a situation full of very grave considerations, for this new policy which has been put forward so suddenly by a Minister of the Crown—this policy which Mr. Chamberlain has threatened, if I may borrow a word from the noble Duke the Lord President of the Council, that he will use every means in his power to bring before and to carry in the constituencies in this country—is a policy which is bound to divide, and possibly will shatter the great Unionist Party, that Party for which the Colonial Secretary has himself done so much during the last eight years to make a great and a powerful Party; and it is also a policy which we have already been told is intimately connected with the whole future of our Empire.

Now, my Lords, those are grave considerations, and it is therefore to the noble Duke the Leader of this House that we all look for some of that information and guidance which it is not convenient to give in another place. The Question which I have put upon the Paper deals with the publications of the Tariff Committee of the Birmingham Liberal Unionist Association. If these publications were merely ordinary expressions of opinion of political agitators in the country, if they were merely the usual sort of pamphlets which are circulated about the country in times of political excitement, I should never have dreamt of coming down to this House and taking up your Lordships' time by asking you to give special attention to them. There are plenty of such leaflets and publications in circulation at the present moment on this as upon many other subjects, and I think I must say that almost without exception they are entirely unworthy of the attention of Parliament. But, my Lords, these particular publications have one feature about them which put them in a different category, which differentiate them altogether from other publications of their kind, and that is the fact that they are universally believed—I do not say at this moment whether rightly or wrongly—to be inspired by a member of that Cabinet which at the present moment, owing to acute differences which exist on the subject, is pledged to nothing more than to a policy of inquiry.

There is, I admit, an element of inquiry even about these Birmingham leaflets, because they are sent out accompanied by two circulars which are labelled "Very important" and "Private and confidential." I think by this time they are sufficiently public to relieve me of any charge of betraying a confidence if I draw your Lordships' attention to them. But what are the questions which are asked? They are three. The first is—

> "How is Mr. Chamberlain's proposed fiscal policy being received in your district?"

Secondly—

> "I should be glad if you would advise me what special arguments are being used with most effect against Mr. Chamberlain's policy, so that, if necessary, special leaflets may be prepared giving our side of the case."

And, finally, a request is made for the names and addresses of gentlemen in the district who are public speakers and supporters of Mr. Chamberlain's policy. That is one of the circulars. The other one makes the very generous offer not only that these leaflets will be given gratis, but that all reasonable cost of distribution will be defrayed by the Association which distributes them.

I next come to the grounds for believing that these publications have a connection with the Colonial Secretary. In the first place, they emanate from Birmingham. The telegraphic address of the Association which sends them out is "Consistent, Birmingham." Those two facts alone would suggest—I do not say more—but would suggest some sort of connection with the Colonial Secretary. Then I find that the circulars are signed by Mr. Vince, whom we know as Mr. Chamberlain's most trusted agent, and who not infrequently signs his official letters. Then a very prominent member of the Committee is Mr. Powell Williams, a man who has been associated with Mr. Chamberlain in his official work, [and in connection with the Liberal Unionist Association, and who, in fact, has been his right-hand man in most of his affairs of organisation. So far, we only find the connection with Mr. Chamberlain's friends; but it is also openly stated in the Press that no leaflet—and thousands have been issued—is sent out from Birmingham before it has been submitted and directly approved by the Colonial Secretary. That is only on the authority of the daily Press, but the statement is significant for this fact alone, that it has up to the present moment received no contradiction.

If the noble Duke will give me some definite assurance that this committee is a thoroughly irresponsible body, that it has never received any encouragement or any assistance in any form whatever from the Colonial Secretary; in other words, that there is no justification whatever for connecting the one with the other; he will, of course, relieve me of the necessity of pursuing that point any further. But in the absence of any explicit assurance of that kind, we must fall back upon the more natural assumption that Mr. Chamberlain knows his own mind, and that he is not going to allow the grass to grow under his feet. Mr. Chamberlain probably feels, as everybody else does, that

> "Thoughts shut up want air,
> And spoil like bales unopen'd to the sun."

and, therefore, we may look upon these publications as some of the means which he has assured us he will not fail to use in order to get support for his policy. We are justified, in view of the statement I have just read, in regarding these pamphlets as being directly inspired by him: and, that being the case, some special weight attaches to the arguments which are used. Without unduly taking up your Lordships' time, I should like to direct your attention to one or two of the statements which are there made. There is, first of all, a very engaging leaflet called "The Truth about Taxation of Food," in which we read, on the first page, that—

> "By encouraging British farming, it will bring back to cultivation thousands of acres of derelict land."

and when we turn over the page, we find it stated that—

> "The statement that import duties on food are paid wholly by the consumer is contradicted by common-sense. . . . The duty will encourage the production of wheat at home and in the colonies. It will, therefore, increase the amount of wheat in the world; and an increase of supply must mean a falling of price."

Now, my Lords, any policy which will both bring back to cultivation thousands of acres of derelict land, and at the same time bring about a reduction in the price of wheat, is a policy which I think we all desire to see put into execution at the earliest possible opportunity; and if the Government are able to bring about such a result as that, if they have such a policy as that, I only wonder that they have delayed so long in submitting it to Parliament. But I confess it does suggest some sort of resemblance to a certain famous Amendment which was passed in this House last year on the Education Bill, by which the cost of the repairs to maintained schools was placed on the State, provided that no extra charge was made on the public funds. If these things are possible, they are very well worth doing. That is not the only inconsistency I find, because in another leaflet I see it stated that one of the great drawbacks to that system of free trade which has existed in this country up to the present has been that it has driven a number of British workmen out of employment and compelled them to emigrate, where they are finding employment in competition with their comrades at home. Yet on page 1 of the first pamphlet from which I quoted it was stated that—

> "A duty on wheat will provide occupation for thousands of Englishmen who will emigrate to Canada and Australia instead of flocking to the towns, overcrowding the slums, and overstocking the urban labour market."

I find another leaflet which puts forward this amazing economic theory. First of all it gives a list of the imports and exports, derived from the Board of Trade Returns, and then it says that every item that goes to make up the export Return means employment and wages for British industry—

> "Exports are what we sell, imports what we buy. The interest of the wage-earner is therefore in the export Return."

And the leaflet concludes by saying—

> "This is Mr. Chamberlain's policy. Is it not worth fair and favourable consideration?"

We are to take it then, my Lords, that Mr. Chamberlain's object is to induce the working man of this country to submit to a tax upon his food by directing his attention to the export Return of the Board of Trade, and asking him to keep his attention closely fixed on that Return, and that Return only—in fact, to ignore altogether the home market, which I should have thought was rather an important consideration, and also the Return of imports, which includes both his food and his raw material. If any of your Lordships had credited Mr. Chamberlain with the policy which is contained in these leaflets, I think he would have been told by the First Lord of the Admiralty that he was attributing impossible schemes to the Colonial Secretary for the purpose of rejecting them; in other words, that he would be playing at a sort of "political Aunt Sally," but here we have an "Aunt Sally" which comes direct from Birmingham, and which bears the trade mark "Consistent, Birmingham." Therefore it is one which I think those who regard it with some suspicion are justified in demolishing if they are able to do so.

What I want to know is whether this policy of the Colonial Secretary has yet been adopted by the Cabinet as a whole, and, if so, when it is to be submitted in detail to Parliament. If it is not the policy of the Cabinet, if they have no policy, if they are still inquiring, then I should like to be informed whether Mr. Chamberlain is the only member of the Cabinet who has made up his mind, and who is actively inviting support for his own views. What are the other members of the Cabinet doing? Are they allowing the grass to grow under their feet? I say that this is an impossible situation, it is a situation which ought not to be allowed to continue. If there is to be a complete change in the fiscal policy of this country, that is a matter of such grave importance that it ought not to be approached except by some definite proposals submitted to Parliament and submitted on the authority of a united Cabinet. No attempt ought to be made to snatch a hasty and ill-considered verdict from the country upon some vague and general proposition—a verdict which may afterwards be used as a mandate from the country to carry out one of the most radical and far-reaching changes in the traditional policy of this country. If the Government has a plan or a policy, I say, and I say emphatically, that that plan ought to be explained and ought to be given to the country and to Parliament in detail; and, if it has not a plan, then I think it is an unconstitutional and a mischievous practice for individual members of the Cabinet to be canvassing the electorate, either directly or indirectly, either openly or by means of their friends, for the support of views which they may hold individually but which have not been put forward on the authority of the Prime Minister and which have not the sanction of the rest of their colleagues. I will conclude by making a strong appeal to the noble Duke the Lord President of the Council to give us some further explanation of this state of affairs, and I would ask your Lordships to believe that I have raised this question with no desire to embarrass His Majesty's Government, and with no intention of precipitating the decision at which they may ultimately arrive.

I feel that the matters they are inquiring into are of sufficient importance to necessitate a very serious and careful investigation; and so long as that inquiry upon which they are engaged is carried on in good faith, so long as the Government is merely investigating the deficiencies, if any, of the present system and trying to find some possible remedy for them, so long as that is the nature and the object of their inquiry, I think that the Government will have both the sympathy and the support of everyone who has the best interests of the country at heart, and the country itself will be quite willing to possess itself in patience until such time as the facts and figures may have been duly arranged. But, my Lords, if the inquiry is merely a temporary makeshift, if it is merely a sort of spurious flag of truce, calculated to give a false sense of security, and under cover of which active preparations are being made for war, then I think we have a right to ask that an end shall be put as speedily as possible to a state of affairs which is opposed to all the accepted traditions of Ministerial responsibility, and which is without precedent in the political history of this country.

THE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (The Duke of DEVONSHIRE): My Lords, the noble Earl has placed on the Paper three clear and distinct Questions, and it would be discourteous on my part if I did not give them an immediate answer. But as I understand that it is desired by several Members of your Lordships' House to continue discussion upon this subject, I hope I may be excused if I do not follow any part of the noble Earl's speech, and if I venture to ask the indulgence of your Lordships to make some further observations later on. The noble Earl asks whether these publications are issued with the knowledge and approval of the Secretary of State for the Colonies. On that question I have consulted with my right hon. friend and his answer is in the affirmative. They are published with his general consent and approval. Mr. Chamberlain, however, is not a member of the Tariff Committee and is not aware of, or personally responsible for, all that appears in its publications. The noble Earl then asks whether what is described in them as "the Chamberlain policy" and "the fiscal policy of Mr. Chamberlain" is the policy of the Government. The answer to that question is distinctly in the negative. The fiscal policy of Mr. Chamberlain has been explained in his own speeches, and he has expressly stated that he spoke only his own opinion, and did not intend to commit his colleagues. The noble Earl asks, in the third place, when this policy will be expounded in Parliament. As I have already said, the Government have up to the present time no new fiscal policy to propose, and the answer therefore is that it cannot either now, or at any short period, be expounded to Parliament.

LORD JAMES OF HEREFORD: My Lords, I feel sure that the great majority of the House will agree that we have arrived at a condition approaching a crisis which may possibly have results disastrous to the nation. It is unprecedented in the political history of this country that a member of a Government should separate himself from the action of his colleagues and announce that "a big fight" is to take place under his leadership, and not with the co-operation, and perhaps not with the sanction, of his colleagues. This is a position which has shaken the confidence of the people in Parliamentary action, and the position has been aggravated by what has occurred since the pronouncement in question. Your Lordships heard the other day of a great inquest of the nation being held. That great inquest ought to be held in this Chamber or in the other House of Parliament; but forgetting the usual practice, and what would be the course not only convenient, but almost necessary, for public safety, we have this great war announced to take place under conditions that are most fatal to fair warfare. What is announced is not a policy, but the outline of a policy, which is sent out under pressure to the people to discuss first what it means, and then express an opinion on what they do not understand.

If this were a question affecting only this country internally—such a measure, for example, as the repeal of Church rates or the extension of the franchise—we might regret that it should be launched under the present conditions; but this question affects not only the home country, but every self-governing colony and every foreign nation, and our relations with it. It is, therefore, a question that ought to have been launched after the gravest consideration and with the greatest care that no wrong should be done. Under the present conditions may we not apprehend that as this uncontrolled war proceeds the consequences will be that we shall be teasing every colony, irritating every foreign nation, and disturbing every interest at home. This strange result will proceed from the fact that there has been forgetfulness of the responsibility of Parliament, a responsibility which we are willing to accept, but which His Majesty's Ministers refuse to give us. The distinction between Parliamentary discussion and discussion on the platform of a public meeting is self-evident. In the one case you have assertion made and answer given at once; in the other, statements may be made that are not quite accurate and no immediate reply is possible.

I am not going to reply to the leaflets, but there was one grave mistake made by someone when he said there was £100,000,000 of trade with our colonies and that such trade was equal to £10 per head. That is repeated in one of these pamphlets and scattered in millions throughout the country, and people believe it. If such a statement were made in Parliament it would be refuted at once. I will make one practical suggestion to the Government. This discussion is raised in no hostile spirit, but became those who have initiated it are supporters of the Government, and are anxious to know what can be done to remedy the sad prospect before us. On May 28 there was a clear statement made of a definite policy of duties on food so as to give preferential treatment to the colonies. That is the subject upon which the feeling of the nation is centred. Is it not possible that an *ad interim* report may be presented to the nation? Can it be possible that in a matter so vital, so much affecting almost the very lives of our people and our relations with our colonies, the opinions of the Government can be still in the air and unknown. If Parliament discussed this great question in the first place the great danger that might arise from the sensitiveness of our colonies would be avoided. I know that it is said that the report as to the result of import duties on food cannot be presented before Parliament rises; but the announcement of May 15 should never have been made if the time was so inopportune that between then and the rising of Parliament that report could not be presented.

Why is the announcement made at a time when Parliament is shut out from the power of dealing with the subject? The most convenient place for discussion is in the other House, responsible for the taxation of the people, and not by means of discursive debate or distribution of leaflets. I venture to make an appeal to my noble friend the Lord President of the Council. It is thirty years since I became a follower of my noble friend, and I never set more store upon that leadership than I do to-day. Throughout the country there are many men of different Parties who have drawn the inference from my noble friend's long political life that he is always actuated by a stern sense of honesty, common-sense, and good feeling towards his fellow men. Seventeen years ago, at a time when many men thought a great danger, a great peril, threatened the country, my noble friend forgot those obligations to which he has always given the greatest allegiance; personal friendships did not prevent, and long political associations did not discourage him; he took the course of standing in the way and saving the country from what he and his followers believed would prove a great disaster. History repeats itself, and again an opportunity is afforded to my noble friend to stand forth, to give his aid and advice to the people of this country, who will cheerfully follow him in averting a great disaster.

EARL SPENCER: My Lords, my noble and learned friend who has just sat down spoke as a warm supporter of the Government. I cannot say that, but I share the feeling with which he has referred to the Lord President. I entirely endorse what has been said as to the high qualifications of the noble Duke to speak on the subject. In my own position I have been unfortunately separated politically from the noble Duke for seventeen years, before which I was as intimately connected with my noble friend as any Member of the House, and I can fully endorse what has been said as to the confidence in his judgment. His great common-sense, his loyalty, and his great courage are well known. I regret to have again and again to put my noble friend into what may be an awkward position. His views on the subject are known; his powerful, lucid speech made on the first occasion when this matter was raised, assured us that the noble Duke is a free trader. Therefore it is with some regret that I add to the noble Duke's difficulties by asking Questions on the policy which Members of the Government pursue. That cannot be avoided. He is in a very responsible position, and the duty of answering falls to him.

What is the position of His Majesty's Government? My noble friend Lord Rosebery said inquiry was an ingenious mechanism for keeping the Government together, and in a more feeble way I called the inquiry a bond for uniting a great many of those who, though they might differ from Members of the Government on this great question, still desired to maintain the Government and give them support. Now, my Lords, is the inquiry real or sham? It is reported that there was a compact among members of the Cabinet to the effect that for a certain time, at all events during the sitting of Parliament, no one Member of the Cabinet was to advocate any particular view he might entertain on the subject. If there was such a compact, and if the inquiry was not a sham, what is the meaning of these leaflets? I can see no distinction between a speech from a Minister and a leaflet issued with his authority. The fact that the leaflets are circulated and prepared with great ingenuity and ability seems to me to be an entire breach of the compact. We hear that the leaflets are being sent into every constituency, not only into those represented by Members of the Liberal Party, but also where Unionist Members have seats, and where the Members have declared against the fiscal policy advocated by Mr. Chamberlain. This seems to me a state of things which His Majesty's Government should speedily bring to an end.

What are we to look forward to? The Colonial Secretary has announced his intention to commence a campaign in favour of his policy early in October, and it appears that this is not merely a threat; while from a letter to a distinguished person in the City there seems to be an intention to bring this campaign to a close in the Metropolis in January. Can this take place while Mr. Chamberlain remains Colonial Secretary? If so, it will be almost impossible to dissociate his views and arguments from the responsibility of the Cabinet as a whole. It is hardly possible, unless the Cabinet accepts his policy, which we know is not the case, that Mr. Chamberlain can continue to maintain his position; I cannot suppose the noble Duke taking the field and making speeches against the policy of Mr. Chamberlain, his colleague. It is absolutely essential that as speedily as possible an end should be put to a state of affairs that impairs the responsibilities of Government and is opposed to our notions of sound government. Before Parliament rises there should be some distinct announcement of policy; and I should like to know from the noble Duke whether the Government still maintain the position of treating every attempt in another place to raise the subject as a proposal for a vote of censure and so preventing discussion. The question must be submitted to the country when the policy is defined, and I have no doubt as to the decision of the country.

VISCOUNT CROSS: May I ask His Majesty's Government a Question? I understand that, so far, the policy of Mr. Chamberlain is not the policy of the Government.

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE: Hear, hear!

*VISCOUNT CROSS: Then that fact ought to be proclaimed. Speaking as one who has been a free trader all his life, I think the present position is a very anomalous one. It is the duty of the Cabinet to decide, after they have made the inquiry which they desire, what, in their opinion, ought to be the policy of the country. They ought to come forward before Parliament rises and explain what the policy of the Government is. I do not think there is a warmer supporter of the Government in your Lordships' House than I am, but I feel a sincere compassion for the supporters of the Government in the other House who, on meeting their constituents, will be asked—

"Do you support the Government in their fiscal policy or do you not?"

I am afraid these gentlemen will be obliged to say that they do not know what the fiscal policy of the Government is. All the information I have at present is the comforting statement of the noble Duke that the fiscal policy attributed to Mr. Chamberlain is not the fiscal policy of the Government. If that declaration may be published as the opinion of the Cabinet declared to us by the Leader of the House it will be something to go upon. But can a more miserable state of things be conceived than that in which one particular member of the Cabinet should press his policy in the constituencies? Are other Members of the Cabinet to go about saying, as I understand the noble Duke to say, that Mr. Chamberlain's policy is not the policy of the Government, or are they to say that they throw this matter before the constituencies and leave it to them to give the lead? This course would not be in accordance with the Constitution. It is the duty of the Government to lead, and of the country to turn them out if it thinks the lead wrong. For them to go about making speeches first for one policy and then another is like throwing the reins of a horse upon its neck instead of driving it in the right direction.

*THE EARL OF NORTHBROOK: My Lords, I consider the situation to be both anomalous and dangerous. The inquiry has lasted long enough, and it is the duty of the Government to give some indication before Parliament separates what their policy really is. The noble Duke has said that the result of the inquiry cannot now or within a short period be announced. In using those words he has, no doubt, expressed the opinion of the Cabinet. I appeal, however, to the noble Duke to use his great influence to modify the opinion of the Cabinet which he has just announced. There are two distinct questions before the country. The first question—raised by Mr. Chamberlain in the other House—is whether it is desirable to make preferential arrangements with the colonies, involving a duty upon imports of food into this country. There are other questions which, I think, are subordinate—important questions which have been most ably dealt with by my noble friend the Foreign Secretary—such as the question of negotiations with Germany and the possibility of retaliation in respect of the conduct of Germany towards Canada. I consider these two questions to be separate and distinct. I cannot understand why the Cabinet can not now come to a definite determination whether the policy of preferential duties in the colonies, coupled with a duty on food imports in this country, is or is not the policy of the Government. The question is one which ought to be determined by the Cabinet before Parliament separates. I hope the noble Duke will exercise all the authority he possesses in the Cabinet to obtain such a decision.

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE: My Lords, I do not think it is possible for me to decline to address a very few observations to your Lordships in answer to the appeal which has been made to me, not only from the front Bench opposite, but also from my noble and learned friend who sits behind me. I am bound to say that I am not aware in what way I can add anything to what I have endeavoured to place before the House on former occasions, nor am I able to see in what respect the position in which the Government and Parliament stand towards this question has in any degree been altered since last we discussed this question in this House. From a very early period of the discussion the position which has been taken up by the Secretary for the Colonies has been very clearly defined. It does not seem to me to make very much difference to that position and to his relation to this question that certain pamphlets or leaflets should have been published with his authority; because, so far as I know—I have not seen those pamphlets and leaflets—so far as I have heard anything in the discussion this evening, they add very little to what we have all read in the published speeches of the Secretary for the Colonies.

As I have said, the position of my right hon. friend has from the outset been perfectly clear. He has made his inquiry into the results which have been obtained by the system of free imports during a period of fifty years. He has formed his conclusion, and he has definitely announced his intention of endeavouring, so far as he is able, to obtain from the constituencies, from the people of this country, authority not to carry out a certain plan, but authority to make certain overtures to the colonies of preferential treatment, authority to propose certain changes in fiscal arrangements. There is no doubt what the policy of the Colonial Secretary is, and I venture to think that the position of the Government is equally clear. No member of the Government, so far as I am aware, has said a single word to identify himself with the policy which has been thus announced or sketched out by the Colonial Secretary. What the Government have said is that they consider that there is a case for inquiry. I stated on a former occasion when I addressed the House on this subject some of the grounds on which we thought an inquiry was necessary, and I do not think any object would be gained by recapitulating the statement of those grounds. But we have not in the least changed our opinion that such an inquiry is necessary, and until it is completed, and until we have had time to consider the results of that inquiry, we have no policy to propose.

With reference to the question of Lord Cross, I have only to say that, until we are convinced by the results of the inquiry which we are making that changes in any direction are required, the policy of the Government with regard to the fiscal arrangements which regulate our commercial system is the policy which now exists. My noble and learned friend behind me made a suggestion which, I think, on reflection, he will scarcely conceive to be a practicable one. He suggested that before the end of the session we should make what he calls an interim report. My Lords, this inquiry is not being conducted by a Royal Commission. It is being conducted by the Cabinet itself, and the result of this inquiry will not be a report; it will be either that we adhere to the fiscal policy of the country as it now exists, or that we adopt such changes as have been suggested, or that we adopt some minor modifications of the existing system. What my noble and learned friend calls a report would be an interim declaration of policy; and until the Cabinet are in a position to frame their final conclusions upon the inquiry which they are conducting it seems to me that they will only be adding confusion to confusion if they do anything in the nature of proposing an interim policy to the country.

I am bound to say, my Lords, that I do not understand the extreme and nervous anxiety with which some of my friends appear to regard the position of free trade. Free trade has now had in this country full and fair and complete trial for a period of fifty years. The inquiry which we are conducting is not an inquiry into the merits of any rival policy; it is an inquiry into the results of that fifty years trial, its results, economical, financial, industrial, commercial, social, and political. If those results should be found—and it will depend upon what is proved or what we hold to be proved as to those results, as to whether they have been on the whole beneficial to the country or whether they have in any respect failed in the carrying out the expectations with which they were introduced—it will depend on the results of that inquiry whether we have any change to propose or not. As I have said, this policy has now had a full and complete trial for a period of fifty years. A Minister, no doubt a powerful Minister, has impeached that policy. But because a few speeches have been made in the country, and a few leaflets have been issued by a branch of a political organisation, and because the Government have admitted that they consider that the time is ripe for an inquiry, then we are told that the very foundations of our free trade policy are being sapped. What is this policy, which at the blast of the trumpet of a single Minister, however powerful, is to collapse because its results are to be exposed to examination? I have a better opinion of free trade than some of those who feel this nervous anxiety about the possible results to the permanence of the principle if it is once exposed to inquiry.

If any very definite assertions have been made impugning the policy of free trade, it seems to me that it would be far more useful if, instead of indulging in these plaintive appeals to the Government or the free-trade members of the Government, those who are strongly convinced of the soundness of the principles of free trade would devote a little of their time to the examination of these allegations that are made, and would prove them to be entirely wrong. For myself, I believe that these allegations are unfounded. I believe also that even if free trade has not done for us all that some of its authors expected that it would or could do, it is not very difficult to prove that any alternative policy would not remedy the evils complained of, and might involve us in greater evils still. But when this inquiry has been assented to, not only by the Government, but also by such a man as my noble friend Lord Goschen, by, I think, the noble Earl who sits on the cross benches, Lord Rosebery, and, I think, admitted also by other Members of the Opposition, I cannot see why we are now suddenly to abandon the policy of inquiry or, before that inquiry is completed why we are to announce an interim or final policy.

I have not heard the expression to-night, but I have heard it said very often in the course of these discussions that the Government are sitting on the fence, and that that is an undignified or unconstitutional position. Well, I quite admit that there may be circumstances in which what is called sitting on the fence may be an undignified and unconstitutiona position for any Government. In circumstances where a prompt and immediate decision is required, to occupy a position of doubt and uncertainty and to wait until the opinions of the constituencies can be ascertained—I can conceive that that may be extremely undignified. When the policy of the disestablishment of the Irish Church was proposed by a responsible Minister and his friends an immediate decision was required of every man who had any responsibility, and to occupy a doubtful and uncertain position on such a question as that would have been pronounced unworthy of any man who called himself a statesman. So again, when the policy of Home Rule was proposed by that same responsible Minister, I hold that it was the duty of every man taking part in public affairs to make up his mind whether he would support that policy or whether he would oppose it to the best of his ability, and not to wait until he had ascertained what would be the prevailing opinion in the country on the subject.

So, again, when it was a question of our relations with the Transvaal Government whether this country should enforce its claims or yield to the position taken up by the Boer Government, it was impossible for any man with a sense of responsibility to refrain from taking a decided line and giving his vote on one side or the other. But in a case of this kind, where there is no proposal by the Government to make any change in our fiscal arrangements, where all to which we are committed is a policy of inquiry into the results of a policy which has been in force now for fifty years, I cannot see that this position of caution, or, if you will, of hesitation, is in any way undignified. It seems to me that you might just as well say that a Judge in a Court of law is sitting on the fence because he declines to give his judgment until he has heard the evidence and until he has heard counsel on both sides. That is the position which the Government have taken up in this matter. The policy of free trade has been impeached. We say that there may be a case; but until that case has been argued, and until we know the evidence and the arguments founded upon it, we decline to be driven into a premature announcement of the conclusions which we have or which we may form. What all these discussions amount to is that the position of the Colonial Secretary and the line which he is taking in the country is an unconstitutional one.

I can only refer to what I have already said. It all comes to this—that in the opinion of those who address these appeals to us, it is necessary, in the highest constitutional interests of the country, that somebody should resign. I asked a question the other day to which I have as yet received no answer. Who is to resign? I gather from the speeches which have been made this evening that a self-respecting Prime Minister would have told Mr. Chamberlain that he ought to resign. That seems to me to be a somewhat illogical position, having regard to the inquiry which we have undertaken to carry out. If the result of that inquiry should be to convince the Prime Minister, or any of his principal colleagues, that the impeachment of free trade was a well-founded impeachment, and that changes in that policy ought to be effected, the Prime Minister would probably find himself in rather an absurd position if he had to go back to Mr. Chamberlain and say, "We find that you were quite right. No doubt we turned you out before we made that discovery, but we shall be glad if you will now come back and help us out of our difficulty." That seems to be a practical difficulty in the way of demanding the resignation of Mr. Chamberlain. Then I ask, who else ought to resign? Ought the Prime Minister to resign before the result of the inquiry which he is conducting is known? Or ought we, who are supposed to be the Members of the Cabinet most averse from any tampering with the doctrines of free trade, to resign and deprive the Cabinet of such humble assistance as it may be possible for us to give in the defence of the principles of free trade? My Lords, I cannot see that that is a practical solution of the question. Neither can I see that the position is in the smallest degree altered from what it was when we last discussed it in this House, or when the Prime Minister challenged the Opposition, if they thought that our position in this matter was an illogical or unconstitutional one, to take the straightforward Parliamentary course of moving a vote of censure, and inviting the opinion of the House of Commons on the question whether our conduct was unconstitutional or whether it was not. Under our Parliamentary system I cannot see that there is any solution but that well-known and time-honoured one of bringing such matters as these to a decision. It is of no use for noble Lords to come down to this House and utter these complaints and appeals unless they are prepared to take some definite action, to place in a definite form the grievance which they have against the Government, to say in what respect they think it has departed from its duty, and to challenge the opinion of the House and, through the House, that of the country.

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY: My Lords, in discussing this question we who do not agree with the noble Duke and the position which he takes up are in a position of singular difficulty. In the first place, it is to be remarked that, out of the several hundred independent supporters which the Government have in this House, not one, as far as I know, has risen to justify the action of the Government in this matter. The debate to-night has been one of almost unmixed censure upon the position of the Government.

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE: No.

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY: If the noble Duke is satisfied with it I am, and with one exception that debate has been conducted by the habitual supporters of the Government. But there is one greater difficulty still, and that is that the Government, for the purpose of securing an absolute consistency in their utterances, limit their speaking to one Member of their body, and that is the noble Duke, who has already made two speeches this evening while his colleagues have sat silent beside him. I share in the fullest degree all the expressions of confidence and admiration which have been so freely given to the noble Duke this evening—expressions which I desire to renew with all the more warmth on this the auspicious anniversary of his birth. If my respect for him could have been increased, it would have been enhanced by the very manly, straightforward speech which he has made this evening. We regard his presence in the Cabinet as a guarantee that, as long as he is there, the fiscal system of this country will not be interfered with; and, therefore, if we have occasion to criticise the acts and the position of the Government, it is most ungrateful and distasteful to us that we should appear in any way to associate that criticism with the person of the noble Duke. But I would venture to say that his speech, outspoken as it was with regard to his fiscal faith, failed singularly in appreciation of the position of the Government and of the criticism which ir directed against that position.

The noble Duke thinks that it is enough to say that the position of the Government has not changed since we last discussed this question. That is precisely the ground of our complaint—that we think that the position of the Government is an unconstitutional position, and that its remaining immutable is a ground of complaint to the people of this country. The noble Duke seems to think that there is nothing at all unusual—perhaps I am putting it rather stronger than he himself did—in the spectacle which we have before us, of a free discussion of the fiscal policy of the country conducted by one Member of the Cabinet, who is, perhaps, almost the most powerful Member of it, amidst the silence of his colleagues, except when it is broken by the outspoken repudiations of the noble Duke. That is a situation unprecedented in the constitution of this country.

It may seem a simple thing to the noble Duke that the Colonial Secretary should announce that he is about to commence a big campaign against the fiscal system of this country, and that he should be already distributing by the million leaflets which convey rather crude ideas of political economy, in order to further that campaign, while the Government sits and watches, and determines to make up its mind at some late period of the autumn. But was not the noble Duke rather unkind to the late Chancellor of the Duchy in refusing an interim report? The noble Duke says, "I should be giving you a fragment of policy, when we mean eventually to give you the whole." But half a loaf is better than no bread; and, as Lord Cross pointed out, the followers of the Government in the House of Commons are compelled to appear before their constituents—obligations from which your Lordships are happily free—possibly before the Government has made up its mind, and they have to declare their support of a policy of which they have not the faintest notion, and of which the very first element is absolutely unknown. Surely common feelings of compassion for suffering fellow-creatures should have moved the noble Duke. He seems to think that all is solved by the blessed word "inquiry." We must remember how the inquiry came about, if, in the ordinary sense of the word, there is any inquiry at all. We had just got over the Budget which repealed a tax on flour and wheat, and we thought that we were aware of the fiscal policy of the Government for the coming year. All of a sudden the Colonial Secretary comes down and delivers a speech, which was a manifesto against free trade, and which contained several important propositions which, I am convinced from the speech of the noble Duke, he is totally unable to swallow. Now the remainder of the history of this proceeding must rest upon conjecture; but it is so obvious and apparent that it enters the region of certainty. It is obvious that when the Cabinet read that speech their breath was entirely taken away. They had no ground to expect any such declaration. They did not think that any one member of the Government had the right to pledge them to that policy. I venture to predict that the position of the Cabinet at that moment was chaotic. They met, and they had to consider how it were best to deal with the situation, and they hit on the formula of an inquiry which was to satisfy the people, until under the shadow of that inquiry, and in the time that the inquiry might be presumed to take, the Government could frame a fiscal policy with which to meet the country in the autumn. I say that is as plain and as clear as anything in the world can be. The noble Duke asks us in these circumstances to feel a blind faith in this inquiry. He denies to his followers any inkling of its results, and he tells us that this is a satisfactory position for the Government to occupy—that while one trumpet has been blown from a very conspicuous quarter, the rest of the Cabinet are to be allowed to hold themselves in meditation and investigate the simple truths of political economy.

I am not one of those who go so far as to say that there is no inquiry at all. There is a famous passage in one of Dickens's books in which Mrs. Prig falls out with Mrs. Gamp, and speaking of her favourite heroine, whose name was Harris, she suddenly exclaimed, "I don't believe there is no sich a person." There are many who will say that there is no "sich thing" as an inquiry conducted by His Majesty's Government. I am not one of those who are inclined to believe that there is such a thing in the ordinary sense, but I believe free licence has been given to every member of the Cabinet to address conundrums to the Board of Trade, and any member of the Cabinet has a right to take down the volumes in his library of political economy and to utilise them for his leisure reading. More than that I confess I do not believe, and I think I have some reason. We have had, in the course of our investigations two lights thrown on the inquiry by very eminent members of the Government. One was the Foreign Secetary, who said in the most emphatic way that if such an inquiry were conducted it must be a public inquiry. Some of us have been waiting ever since for the announcement of that public inquiry. Then there was another light thrown upon it in a phrase which has already become dear to us. It was given to us by the First Lord of the Admiralty, who said that the inquiry was a "grand inquest" of the nation. I do not say that these expressions, as far as we have gone into the inquiry, are eminently misleading, but they do justify the scepticism of some who doubt whether any inquiry in the ordinary sense of the word is progressing at all. What is the "grand inquest" of the nation? It is, as far as we know, the House of Commons. The House of Commons has made every endeavour to discuss this question, and has invariably been refused.

The Earl of Rosebery.

I do not know a more pathetic, or, I may add, more ridiculous spectacle in the world than that which the House of Commons presents at this moment. Here is she, the mother of Parliaments, exhorted by the First Lord of the Admiralty and the other members of the Cabinet to proceed to a free and full inquiry on the fiscal policy of the nation, exhorted in loud tones by the Government to do this while they have gagged and bound her to prevent her from doing anything of the kind. Can there be a more preposterous position for a body which boasts itself to be the free expression of the opinions of this country, to be the mouthpiece of the voice of the nation, than to be told at one moment by the Government, and all day long by the Government, that a discussion is what the Government wants, and then to deny it any opportunity of having it except under a vote of censure?

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE: Why not?

THE EARL OF ROSEBERY: The noble Duke is always asking for a vote of censure, and I am always answering him, though I do not think he considers my answers satisfactory. I will speak my mind on this point to the noble Duke. I say quite truly that if I were in the House of Commons I would ask for a day to discuss a Motion, "That the House of Commons should resolve itself into Committee on the state of the nation." There is a precedent for that Motion in 1849, when it was moved by the late Lord Beaconsfield and rejected by a very considerable majority. But the advantage of that proposition is this—that it does not necessarily pledge Parliament or the country to any particular policy in this matter. It does enable the

House of Commons to have that free and full inquiry in the matter which the Government are constantly inviting. I do see strategical disadvantages in moving a vote of censure, because it is quite obvious that a vote of censure rallies to the support of the Government all its followers, however critical and unsympathetic they may be in every-day life, on some critical occasion like that. Indeed, gratitude for the manifold benefits lavished on Ireland by the Land Bill might swell the Government majority beyond its ordinary size and might give to the Empire and foreign countries a false opinion of the true voice of the nation with regard to this question of free trade.

That is my answer to the noble Duke. But I do press upon him most earnestly that this policy of telling the country that the Cabinet is engaged in inquiry is not sufficient for a nation so active and inquisitive as this. I hope that I shall not be accused of making any disparaging comparison when I say that it reminds me rather of the case which has excited great interest in France, and which is, I believe, still pending before the Courts, where an enterprising lady raised enormous sums of money by the exhibition of a safe—or it may have been a cabinet—which she represented as containing unbounded treasures. We are in the position of the gullible victims of that lady, but the experience of those in France has already made us cautious. The Government presents us with the spectacle of pointing to the closed door of the Cabinet and saying—"We confess that we are not able to give you any satisfaction with regard to our policy, but look at that door. Inside that door there are treasures of wisdom, experience, eloquence, sound judgment on this subject, and when that door is opened they will be revealed." But I am sorry to say that Madame Humbert's treasures represented only a fourpenny piece in the safe; and I am inclined to think that when the door of the Cabinet is opened—unless it is for a purpose which I should sincerely deplore to see—a large number of its members walking out never to return inside it—we shall not have more satisfaction than the victims in the Humbert case.

I hope your Lordships will excuse me for introducing a semi-humorous epilogue to exemplify what I believe to be a grave situation. I defy the noble Duke, however large and varied the experience he may have, to come down night after night and represent that the position of the Government is either normal or defensible. I for one, even if I had the power, which I have not, do not force the situation, because I should not like the inquiry to resolve itself into a question as to which wing of the Cabinet it would be that would have to resign when it came to a contest. I confess that I do not quite agree with the noble Duke that no other member of the Cabinet has given any public support to the proposals of the Colonial Secretary. I understand that the Foreign Secretary and the First Lord of the Admiralty give considerable indirect support; but not knowing which wing of the Cabinet may retire defeated in this intestinal strife as to the inquiry in which they are engaged, I prefer to wait for what I hope, through the character and ability of the noble Duke, will be the ultimate victory of free trade principles, which have to a large extent made this Empire what it is.

THE SANITARY CONDITION OF HOLYROOD PALACE.

THE EARL OF LEVEN AND MELVILLE: My Lords, I beg to ask the Chief Commissioner of His Majesty's Office of Works at what date previous to 1902 any examination of the drainage system, the sanitary condition, and the water supply of the Palace of Holyrood House was made, and to move for copies of any report or correspondence relating to that examination; to ask whether, in future, if the Consulting Sanitary Adviser of the Office reports that any building must not be occupied until its sanitary arrangements have been reorganised, His Majesty's Office of Works will at once communicate that opinion to those who occupy, or are about to occupy, the said building; whether he is well assured that the sum voted for Holyrood Palace will be sufficient to make the whole drainage and water supply system thoroughly effective and good, and also to put the Palace generally into a fit condition for the residence of the Sovereign or his Representative; and to move for a Return of the Repairs and Improvements in Holyrood Palace and its grounds since 1893, with their cost each year.

On a recent occasion, at the request of my noble friend the Chief Commissioner of Works, I accepted his explanation and assurance and withdrew my Motion for Papers relating to the Palace of Holyrood. I thought that the matter would then have been allowed to drop. But since then my noble friend has thought it right to place upon the Table the Reports and correspondence with reference to this subject, and this action, it appears to me, has changed the matter from one of a purely personal character to one of a much wider and more general interest. I alluded in my previous speech to the Memorandum by Professor Corfield, the Consulting Sanitary Adviser to His Majesty's Office of Works, and I will now read the Memorandum in full. It is as follows—

> "I have read the report referred to in the foregoing Memorandum, and am of opinion that the condition of things described in that report is such that Holyrood Palace ought not to be occupied by His Majesty even for the shortest period until the sanitary arrangements have been thoroughly reorganised. This will take a considerable time, and, in view of the fact that, as I am informed, the High Commissioner must occupy the Palace in April and May next, could not well be commenced until the month of June, and would certainly not be finished before the end of the year, if even then."

This Memorandum, which is dated November 12, 1902, had been in the hands of His Majesty's Office of Works since that time, and I wish to ask my noble friend the Chief Commissioner whether, when the Office of Works receives from its Consulting Sanitary Adviser a report saying that one of the palaces of which they have charge cannot be inhabited, even for the shortest possible period, they are not bound to convey that opinion to those who inhabit or are about to inhabit the palace. I applied at the Office of Works for information as to the drains and was promised that I should see the report, but the report was not forthcoming. It was delayed, under circumstances of extreme inconvenience to myself, as the noble Lord and his office know quite well, for thirteen days, and not for one or two days, as was stated by the noble Lord on the former occasion when I brought this matter before the House. Yet all that time the Office of Works had in their hands this Memorandum from their consulting sanitary adviser to say that the palace was not habitable.

My noble friend says I am to blame, because I was told in the month of October that the drains were not in good order, and had made no inquiry. I had no right to make any inquiry. My appointment as Lord High Commissioner is an annual appointment, and it is one of a personal character as representing His Majesty, and the King, I believe, takes a personal interest in the appointment. For me to have assumed, although it has always been the custom, that I should have been appointed again for the coming year, would have been presumptuous on my part; and, even if I was justified in assuming that, in all probability I should be appointed, it did not follow that I should be the High Commissioner, because that appointment goes with the Government. It would have been presumptuous on my part if, before I was appointed, I had made any inquiry. After I was appointed, and on the first day that I could get to London, I went to the Office of Works on the matter, and at that time they had in their hands this Memorandum which would not have taken more than a few minutes to have copied. I was promised the report on the next day. I did not receive it, and I wrote on several occasions and telegraphed, and the only reply I got was a letter from the Secretary of the Office of Works, from which I quoted a short paragraph on the last occasion, and which I will now read in full. Sir Schomberg McDonnell wrote —

> "My dear LEVEN,
>
> "Windsor tells me that you are anxious to know the precise position as regards the sanitary works at Holyrood before you go abroad to-morrow.
>
> "Let me say at once that you need not be in any way concerned. The new works will not be begun until after the King has paid his visit to Edinburgh, and at present we do not propose to touch them until the third week in next August or thereabouts.
>
> "As regards the present condition of the drains, I think that though they are far from being perfect or up to date, there is no danger to be apprehended to yourself or your household. It would, however, be a very different matter to have the King and Queen staying there with a huge Court. Under such conditions the existing system of drainage would be quite inadequate.
>
> "I hope this will set your mind at rest; in any case, we should do nothing whatever

which would inconvenience you as High Commissioner."

Yours very truly,
SCHOMBERG K. McDONNELL.
18th March, 1903.

It seems to me that the Secretary of the Office of Works took upon himself a grave responsibility when he asked me to go to Holyrood while he held in his hand the report of Professor Corfield showing that it was not habitable even for the shortest possible period. I inhabit the same rooms as I have every reason to believe His Majesty would occupy. They are on the first floor of the south wing of the Palace. There are three or four rooms on the east wing, on the second floor, which have never been opened, I believe, since her late Majesty and Prince Consort were there. They are reached by an exceedingly steep staircase, and it is in the highest degree improbable that His Majesty would ever think of living there. But whether His Majesty would live there or not, it does not alter the question as to the sanitary condition of the south wing in which the Lord High Commissioner must always reside; and out of the large quantity of condemned closets to which I referred, there are no less than eleven in that wing. There is no large bedroom which has not one in the wall between it and the dressing-room, and there is one in the sitting-room. I think the remark that the Palace was not safe for His Majesty but was perfectly safe for me was unjustifiable. The report was not sent to me till March 27 of this year, after my Purse-bearer had been to the Office of Works to press for it. He was not at first shown this Memorandum by Professor Corfield, or the report, but was asked to obtain on my behalf a wholly independent report. What possible use could an independent report be? The Office of Works had this detailed report and the Memorandum from the consulting sanitary adviser, and what advantage could there be in having another report? The only possible use of such a report would have been to remove responsibility, if any evil effects had resulted from my going to the Palace, from the Office of Works to the unfortunate man who might have made that hurried report. My noble friend said that the report might have reached me one or two days sooner. I would point out that it only consists of 1,875 words, which a child could have written within an hour.

I understand that the Secretary of the Office of Works feels aggrieved because, in the first place, I read an extract from his letter. He says that it was semi-private. It was the only answer I got to my application to know the condition of the Palace, and it was written on official notepaper and not marked private. I regret very much if I was not justified in alluding to it, but I do not see what else I could have done. I understand that he also felt aggrieved because I only quoted a part of his letter. Well, I have quoted the whole of it now; and I think the House will see that in my previous quotation I gave the pith of the communication. That letter invited me to place my body in jeopardy while it strove to set my mind at rest. A great deal has been made of the point that in October Sir Schomberg McDonnell told me that the drains were bad, and he considers that that was an official intimation. The way in which I got that information was a perfectly chance one. I had the honour of dining with the Lord Mayor, and, after being received, I happened to stand next to Sir Schomberg McDonnell. I asked him if he had been to Holyrood, and he said he had. The drains, he added, were in bad repair, and he was going to have them seen to. I said I hoped the work would not be carried out in the winter, for obvious reasons. On the last occasion that I called attention to this matter my noble friend the Secretary for Scotland said that if I had given judicious notice to the newspapers of my intention not to occupy Holyrood Palace, no dissatisfaction would have arisen. But I would point out that it was quite impossible for such notice to be given, because the contracts on which the arrangements depended were not complete. I beg to ask the Questions and to move the Motion standing in my name.

Moved, "That there be laid before the House report or correspondence relating to any examination that may have been made previous to 1902 of the drainage system, the sanitary condition, and the water-supply of the Palace of Holyrood

House; and also a return of the repairs and improvements in Holyrood Palace and its grounds since 1893, with their cost each year." (*The Earl of Leven and Melville.*)

*THE FIRST COMMISSIONER OF WORKS (Lord WINDSOR): My Lords, I, in common with other noble Lords who heard the speech of the noble Earl the other day upon this question, listened to it with interest and amusement. But I did hope that the assurance that I was able to give him then of the intentions of His Majesty's Government with regard to the drainage of Holyrood Palace, and my expression of regret that there had been any misunderstanding between himself and the Office of Works with regard to letting him know the exact condition of the drainage would have been satisfactory. I do not think he will expect me to repeat what I said then, but I would add this that when Sir Schomberg McDonnell told my noble friend that the system of drainage at Holyrood Palace had been condemned, the noble Earl left him under the very strong impression, rightly or wrongly, that what the noble Earl was chiefly anxious about was that the drains should not be touched before he had been there himself the next time. Sir Schomberg may have been wrong, but it was under that very strong impression that these letters were written, and I think the letter which my noble friend has quoted in full to-day bears this out, because Sir Schomberg wrote—

> "The new works will not be begun until after the King has paid his visit to Edinburgh."

And he added at the end—

> "In any case we shall do nothing whatever which would inconvenience you as High Commissioner."

I regret very much if there was any misunderstanding on this point, and I beg to assure my noble friend again that there was no intention whatever of concealing from him any reports as to the condition of the drains. The noble Earl asks me whether in future, if the Consulting Sanitary Adviser of the Office of Works reports that any building must not be occupied until its sanitary arrangements have been reconstructed, the Office of Works will at once communicate that opinion to those who occupy or are about to occupy the said buildings. To that I most certainly give an affirmative reply. It is the intention of the Office of Works to communicate to those who are concerned matters of this kind, and I can promise that that will be done in the future. With regard to the noble Earl's question as to what date previous to 1902 any examination of the drainage system, the sanitary condition, and the water-supply of the Palace was made, I can tell him that there was an examination of and a report concerning the water-supply as long ago as 1863, very shortly after the old water-supply had been discontinued, and a supply taken from the City of Edinburgh. In 1872 there was a report about the condition of the drains at that time, and they were tested and found perfectly satisfactory. They were thoroughly flushed in accordance with the usual practice. That is the system which goes on; they can be thoroughly flushed from the City fire mains at this moment. Since 1872 there has been no special report, but I am informed that the first step which the present surveyor took was to have a complete plan of the drainage prepared, and in the years 1893, 1894, 1895, and 1899 renewals and re-arrangements of portions of the drains were carried out, the two latter being of considerable importance. One of the main difficulties had been that the fall was not sufficient, but it was impossible to remedy that until the new City sewer was put in, and when that had been done the fall of the old sewer from Holyrood Palace was altered. That, no doubt, would have been done in any case as soon as it was practicable.

I assure the noble Earl that the surveyor has repeatedly and with regularity inspected all the sanitary works in Holyrood Palace itself. As the Report of Sir Henry Littlejohn shows, they are in excellent order, and have been well kept up. My noble friend moves for copies of these reports. Of course, if he insists upon them they can be laid on the Table; but I venture to suggest that these old reports of the years 1863 and 1872 are merely ancient history, and would be of no importance at this moment. The noble Earl asks me whether I am well assured that the sum voted for Holyrood Palace will be sufficient to make the whole drainage and water supply system thoroughly effective and good. I repeat the assurance I gave on the last occasion, that I am advised that it will be quite sufficient. With regard to the Motion for a Return of the repairs and improvements in Holyrood Palace and its grounds since 1893, with their cost each year, I am unable to give him separately a Return of the repairs and improvements apart from the maintenance of the Palace. I should be able to give him the amount for maintenance asked for and obtained in each year since 1893, but that will, of course, include, as I say, minor repairs, and so forth. Finally, I wish again to assure my noble friend that there was a misunderstanding in this case, and that there was no intention whatever to keep from him reports of the actual condition of the drainage in Holyrood Palace. Every care will be taken to put the drainage in thorough order, and he will have access to any documents he may wish to see in the Office of Works with regard to it.

THE EARL OF LEVEN AND MELVILLE: I freely accept my noble friend's assurance. With regard to the old reports, I agree with him that no advantage would be obtained by their publication. I may say that I was never given the slightest idea by Sir Schomberg McDonnell that the drains were really in a dangerous condition. All he told me was that they were in a bad condition. I was afterwards advised that the peril was one of the most imminent kind. That the Office of Works should have done nothing to stop my going there, but, on the contrary, should have encouraged it, seems to me to require some explanation. With regard to the report by Sir Henry Littlejohn, which declares everything to be satisfactory, I would point out that when he made his inspection the Palace had not been inhabited for eleven months, and, therefore, the drains were, of course, sweet at that time.

Motion, by leave of the House, withdrawn.

IRISH LAND BILL

Read 1ª; and to be printed. (No. 170.)

LONDON EDUCATION BILL

Read 1ª; to be printed; and to be read 2ª on Tuesday next—(*The Earl Vane, M. Londonderry*). (No. 171.)

LICENSING ACTS (SCOTLAND) CONSOLIDATION AND AMENDMENT BILL.

Read 1ª; to be printed; and to be read 2ª on Thursday next—(*The Lord Balfour*). (No. 175.)

House adjourned at half-past Seven o'clock, till to-morrow, Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Thursday, 23rd July, 1903.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Bournemouth Corporation Tramways Bill [Lords]; Sutton Coldfield Corporation Bill [Lords]. To be read the third time to-morrow.

Manchester Corporation Bill [Lords]. Reported from the Police and Sanitary Committee, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

PRIVATE BILLS (GROUP H).

SIR AUGUSTUS GODSON reported from the Committee on Group H of Private Bills: That, for the convenience of parties, they had adjourned until Tuesday next, at half-past Eleven of the Clock; Report to lie upon the Table.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have agreed to—Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 5) Bill; Great Southern and Western Railway Bill; without Amendment.

Amendments to—Scottish American Mortgage Company, Limited, Bill [Lords]; South Lancashire Tramways Bill [Lords]; Didcot, Newbury, and Southampton Railway Bill [Lords]; without Amendment.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to confirm a Provisional Order under The Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, relating to Glasgow Corporation Tramways." [Glasgow Corporation Tramways Order Confirmation Bill [Lords].

Also, a Bill intituled, "An Act to confirm a Provisional Order under the Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, relating to Perth Corporation (Tramways)." [Perth Corporation (Tramways) Order Confirmation Bill [Lords].

And, also, a Bill intituled, "An Act to confirm a Provisional Order under The Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, relating to Aberdeen Corporation Tramways." [Aberdeen Corporation Tramways Order Confirmation Bill [Lords.]

Glasgow Corporation Tramways Order Confirmation Bill [Lords]. Read the first time; to be read a second time upon Friday, 31st July, and to be printed. (Bill 294.)

Perth Corporation (Tramways) Order Confirmation Bill [Lords]; read the first time; to be considered upon Monday next.

Aberdeen Corporation Tramways Order Confirmation Bill [Lords],—read the first time; to be considered upon Monday next.

PETITIONS.

ELECTORAL AREAS (LONDON).

Petition from Shoreditch, for legislation; to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC LIBRARIES.

Petition from Clonmel, for alteration of Law; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

ORDNANCE SURVEY.

Copy presented, of Report of the Progress of the Ordnance Survey to the 31st March, 1903 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

AGRARIAN OUTRAGES (IRELAND).

Copy presented, of Return for the quarter ended 30th June, 1903 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

FORESHORES.

Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 21st July, 1903, directing the application of moneys received by the Board of Trade in the year ended 31st March, 1903, in respect of the rights and interests of the Crown in the Foreshores of the United Kingdom [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

POLICE ACT, 1890.

Copy presented, of Correspondence relative to the refusal of the Secretary of State's certificate under Section 17 (2) of the Act to the River Tyne Police Force for the year ended 29th September, 1902 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

WEST INDIES.

Copy presented, of Report on Excise Restrictions in force in the West Indies and British Guiana in relation to a proposal to sanction the payment of such an allowance on export of rum as shall compensate the distillers in those colonies for additional outlay caused by Excise Restrictions [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

EXPORTS (WOOLLEN AND COTTON GOODS AND CUTLERY).

Return ordered, "of the total amount and total value of our exports to foreign countries of woollen goods, of cotton goods, and of cutlery, respectively, in 1877, 1882, 1887, 1892, 1897, and 1902."—(*Colonel Denny.*)

LOCAL TAXATION LICENCES, 1902-3.

Return ordered, "of the amount received in respect of each administrative county and county borough in England and Wales for local taxation licence duties and penalties, under the Local Government Act, 1888, in the year ended the 31st day of March, 1903."—(*Mr. Grant Lawson.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

"Hyacinth" and "Minerva"—Time Spent on Repairs.

COLONEL DENNY (Kilmarnock Burghs): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty what amount of time has been incurred in overhauls on the "Hyacinth" and "Minerva" respectively since the date of handing over of the former by the builders; how much of the time spent in these overhauls has been expended during the financial year ending 31st March, 1903; and what has been the mileage run on trials and commissions respectively by these ships since the date of intimation to the Boiler Committee that these vessels were ready for comparative trials.

(*Answered by Mr. Arnold-Forster.*) The "Hyacinth" has been in dockyard hands for about nineteen months, and the "Minerva" for about eleven and a half months since the date when the "Hyacinth" was first commissioned—viz., 3rd September, 1900. During the financial year ending 31st March, 1903, the time thus occupied was twenty-three weeks in the case of the "Hyacinth," and twelve weeks in the case of the "Minerva." The "Hyacinth" has run 8,249 knots, and the "Minerva" 9,142 knots on trials since the date of the intimation to the Boiler Committee that the ships were ready for trials, and the total distance run whilst in commission since the 1st January 1901, has been:—"Hyacinth," 16,831 knots; "Minerva," 36,660 knots.

Holyhead Guardship—Trade with Local Shopkeepers.

MR. ELLIS GRIFFITH (Anglesey): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether his attention has been called to the fact that all the officers and men on board the Guardship at Holyhead have received orders that they must procure all their provisions from the canteen and not from any of the local tradesmen; whether he is aware that the canteen on board H.M.Ss. "Resolution" and "Edgar" was carried on by Messrs. Lipton and Company, Limited, and managed by one of their employees, and that the canteen on board H.M.S. "Spartan" is carried on by the Army and Navy Stores under similar conditions; whether the commander is acting in accordance with the regulations in forbidding the men from dealing with the local tradesmen, and thus entailing loss on the town; and whether the Admiralty will take steps to ensure liberty of action in this matter to the officers and men in the service.

(*Answered by Mr. Arnold-Forster.*) The hon. Member's Question seems to be based on erroneous information. No orders have been issued in the vessels referred to prohibiting private dealings with tradesmen on shore, and such a prohibition would not be in accordance with the regulations. The only restriction is with regard to trading actually on board the vessels, a restriction which exists very generally, and which in practice is not found to inflict any hardship on the officers or men.

Increased Wages for Dockyard Trades.

CAPTAIN NORTON (Newington, W.): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty if he can state whether any, and if so what decision has been arrived at as regards the increase of wages for those trades in His Majesty's dockyards whose cases have been under consideration, more especially the joiners.

(*Answered by Mr. Arnold-Forster.*) It is anticipated that the decisions in these cases will be announced at a very early date.

Fiscal Inquiry—Assistance of Co-operative Societies.

MR. BROADHURST (Leicester): To ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the Government have invited the assistance of the wholesale co-operative distributing societies in pursuing the inquiries into the fiscal policy of the country; and, if not, is it their intention to do so.

(*Answered by Mr. A. J. Balfour.*) I have already informed the House that any representations from members of co-operative societies, which are made to the Government in connection with this subject, will be carefully considered.

Indian Contribution to Military Expenditure.

SIR MANCHERJEE BHOWNAGGREE (Bethnal Green, N.E.): To ask the First Lord of the Treasury if, in view of the difference of opinion existing between the Government of India at home and in India and the War Office as regards the liability of the India Exchequer to pay an annual sum of £786,000 on account of the increase in the pay of the British soldier, he will give the House an opportunity for discussing and pronouncing a decision on the policy which necessitates this addition to the military burdens of India.

(*Answered by Mr. A. J. Balfour.*) The policy referred to by my hon. friend is one which concerns the Army as a whole, whether in India or in England. The necessity of augmenting the pay of the British soldier was discussed at great length last year, and it is impossible now to reopen the question.

Land Revenue Defaulters in India—Issue of Writs.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): To ask the Secretary of State for India whether he is in a position to state the number of writs and warrants issued in each province in India against Land Revenue defaulters for the year 1901-2; and will he say how the figures compare with the year 1891-2.

(*Answered by Secretary Lord George Hamilton.*) The Returns of Land Revenue coercive processes have hitherto been compiled on different systems in the different provinces, rendering the compilation of a comparative table impossible. The Government of India have undertaken to obtain figures on a uniform plan from the local Governments, but they have not yet reached me.

Irrigation of Nattore District, Northern Bengal.

MR. WEIR: To ask the Secretary of State for India, seeing that in the month of February last the Chief Engineer of Public Works, Calcutta, made a survey of Nattore, Northern Bengal, with a view to a scheme of irrigation for the district, will he state whether the Government have received a report on the subject, and the cost of the scheme which it is proposed to adopt.

(*Answered by Secretary Lord George Hamilton.*) I have no information on the subject of the scheme referred to.

Kalka-Simla Railway—Date of Opening.

MR. WEIR: To ask the Secretary of State for India if he will state when the railway from Kalka to Simla, about forty miles in length, which was to have been opened last March, and which has been in course of construction for two and a-half years, will be completed; and can he state the cause of the delay.

(*Answered by Secretary Lord George Hamilton.*) The Kalka-Simla Railway is expected to be opened in October. The construction has been delayed by the difficult nature of the country traversed.

Repatriation of Coolies.

MR. WEIR: To ask the Secretary of State for India, seeing that a number of Coolies are engaged at Parulia, in the Orissa district, for service in Assam under a three and a-half years contract, will the Government of India have inquiry made with a view to ascertain the number of Coolies thus annually engaged; and what steps are taken to repatriate them at the expiration of the contract.

(*Answered by Secretary Lord George Hamilton.*) Parulia, which is not in Orissa but in Chota Nagpur, is an important centre for labour emigration to Assam, and large numbers of Coolies are annually recruited there, as to whom details are to be found in the Annual Reports of Emigration published by the Bengal Government. The contracts entered into by emigrants to Assam have never included any stipulation for repatriation, and none is considered necessary.

Indian Budget — Annual Statement of Progress.

MR. HERBERT ROBERTS (Denbighshire, W.): To ask the Secretary of State for India whether he can give any assurance that the annual statement exhibiting the moral and material progress of India will be issued to Members before the discussion on the Indian Budget takes place.

(*Answered by Secretary Lord George Hamilton.*) I am informed that the statement will be issued on Monday morning next. As on this occasion a decennial period instead of a single year is dealt with, more time has necessarily been required for preparation and printing.

Price of, and Duty on, Wheat in England, France, and Germany.

COLONEL LONG (Worcestershire, Evesham): To ask the President of the Board of Trade what was the equivalent in English money of the duty on, and the average price after duty was charged, of a quarter of wheat, taking 500 lbs. to the quarter, at ports of importation in England, Germany, and France in the years 1901 and 1902.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) The information cannot be given in the exact form desired, but the average *Gazette* price of British wheat, and average official price of wheat sold in German and French markets in 1901 and 1902 were as follows, per quarter of 480 lbs.—

	England and Wales.		Germany.†		France.	
	s.	*d.*	*s.*	*d.*	*s.*	*d.*
1901	26	9	35	3	35	3
1902	28	1	35	9	38	0‡

The import duties per quarter were—

	United Kingdom.		Germany.		France.	
	s.	*d.*	*s.*	*d.*	*s.*	*d.*
1901	Free		7	7½	12	2½
1902	1	0	7	7½	12	2½

†Official average for Kingdom of Prussia.

‡Provisional Estimate.

Pay of Office Staff of Irish Lights Board.

COLONEL McCALMONT (Antrim, E.): To ask the President of the Board of Trade when it is proposed to send a reply to the Commissioners of Irish Lights relative to the office staff of that Board; and whether, seeing that it is the only branch of the Irish Lights Board in which the pay is not assimilated to that of the Trinity House, he will explain the cause of the delay, similar recommendations from the Trinity House having been dealt with in a period of a few months.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) The Board of Trade cannot admit that salaries paid to the staff of the Irish Lights Board must necessarily be assimilated to those of Trinity House. The Board will deal with the application on its merits, and are in communication with the Commissioners on the subject. A question has arisen as to the retirement of one of the officers which will have an effect on the acceptance, or perhaps the refusal, of the Commissioners' proposals.

Identification of United States Exports sent via Canada.

MR. D. A. THOMAS (Merthyr Tydvil): To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether the difficulty mentioned in the prefatory note to the Annual State of the Trade of the United Kingdom, of distinguishing between imports of Canadian produce and produce of the United States which finds its way to this country via Canadian ports in the summer months, has yet been surmounted.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) No, Sir. Without legislation giving the Customs power to require certificates of origin it is not possible to distinguish accurately either the imports of United States produce that are shipped to the United Kingdom from Canadian ports in the summer, or those of Canadian produce that are shipped from United States ports in the winter. Where, however, the documents accompanying such produce enable the country of consignment to be ascertained, it is credited by the Customs to that country.

Expenditure of Scotch Fisheries Grant.

MR. JOHN DEWAR (Inverness: To ask the Lord Advocate how much of the grant of £3,000 per annum under the Fishery Board, Scotland, Item D, has been expended in each of the last three financial years; what balance remained unexpended on 31st March, 1903; and also what balance remained at the credit of the Piers and Harbours Deposit Account on 31st March, 1903.

(*Answered by Mr. A. Graham Murray.*) The annual grant referred to in the Question, together with the surplus brand fees, are paid into one deposit account, out of which harbour grants are made, so that there is no allocation of grants to each item separately. The total income from these combined sources for the last three years amounted to £10,327, and the expenditure to £12,164, the difference being made up by the balance on hand at the beginning of the three years period. The balance of the deposit account in hand (allocated but not expended) at 31st March last was £22,115, against grants already allocated amounting to £27,415. Since that date £3,000 (grant) and £2,040 (surplus brand fees) for the current financial year have become available, which shows a balance at the present date of £260 against the deposit account.

Pollution of River Girvan.

Mr. EUGENE WASON (Clackmannan and Kinross): To ask the Lord Advocate whether he is aware that on Sunday, the 12th instant, fifty-six salmon were taken from one part of the river Girvan in a sick or dying condition; and, if so, whether he will instruct the Local Government Board (Scotland) to make inquiry into the pollution of the river by which salmon and trout are annually destroyed.

(*Answered by Mr. A. Graham Murray.*) I am informed that owing to the low state of the river the fact is as stated by the hon. Member. The matter does not fall within the jurisdiction of the Local Government Board, no question of public health being raised. The question of pollution could be raised by the district fishery board or by any other riparian proprietor.

Fishing Rights in Orkney.

Mr. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland): To ask the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, as representing the Office of Woods and Forests, if the pending disposition of fishing rights in Orkney will be suspended until full inquiry can be made as petitioned for by the Orkney County Council.

(*Answered by Mr. Elliot.*) By arrangement with the proposed purchaser the proposed disposition has been postponed for the present.

Wireless Telegraphy in the Navy.

Sir THOMAS DEWAR (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty if he will state how many of His Majesty's ships are now fitted with the Marconi system of wireless telegraphy, and the amount paid to the Marconi Company for the service.

(*Answered by Mr. Arnold-Forster.*) All battleships and a very large number of cruisers are fitted either with the Marconi system of wireless telegraphy or with modifications of that system. As I stated in reply to a Question by the hon. Member for Caithness on the 28th April,† the present average expenditure upon wireless telegraphy is about £20,000 per annum, a considerable portion of this amount being paid to the Marconi Company. An agreement with the Marconi Company is now being concluded, and a use of wireless telegraphy throughout the service will be greatly extended in the future.

Shipbuilding Programme.

Mr. YERBURGH (Chester): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether, in view of the fact that on 23rd July next, there will be two slips vacant at Devonport, both suitable for building a battleship, he will explain what is the necessity which compels the Admiralty to defer the laying down of the battleships of this year's programme until April, 1904.

(*Answered by Mr. Arnold-Forster.*) The battleships for the current year, 1903–4, will be commenced at an early date, and will be built by contract. The ships which it is expected will be laid down in the dockyards will belong to a later programme.

Mr. YERBURGH: To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether all the battleships of the 1902–3 programme have been laid down, and what was the earliest date on which any one of such ships was laid down; and whether any of the battleships of the 1903–4 programme will be laid down before April 1904; and what is the average time that elapses from the date of the preparation of any one year's Estimates before any of the battleships proposed in the said year's Estimates are laid down.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxxi., 647.

(*Answered by Mr. Arnold-Forster*) Both the battleships of the 1902–3 programme have been laid down, the "Hindustan" on the 25th October, 1902, and the "New Zealand" on the 9th February, 1903. It is anticipated that the battleships of the 1903–4 programme will also be laid down well, before the conclusion of the financial year. The average time that has elapsed in recent years between the date of the announcement of the Naval programme to Parliament and the laying down of any of the battleships comprised in that programme has been about ten months; but, as I have stated on other occasions, the Board of Admiralty consider it is not desirable that these long intervals should continue to occur, and it is their desire to return to the system under which the laying down of vessels proposed in any year shall follow closely upon Parliamentary sanction being received. If the hon. Member will refer to the dates on which vessels have been laid down during the past three years and those on which it is proposed to lay down vessels now sanctioned, or in contemplation, he will observe that great progress has already been made in the direction described.

Russian Shipbuilding Programme.

MR. YERBURGH: To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether the Admiralty have now ascertained the particulars of the Russian shipbuilding programme of the present year; and whether they have any information as to when and in what yards the ships will be laid down.

(*Answered by Mr. Arnold-Forster.*) The Admiralty have not received official particulars as to the Russian shipbuilding programme. Such particulars are not published or made public by the Russian Government. It is known, however, that two first-class battleships have now been commenced in the Black Sea, and it is considered probable that two more will be laid down at an early date in the Baltic.

Knighton Guardians and the Education Rate.

MR. EDWARDS (Radnor): To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been called to the fact that the Guardians of the Knighton Union have passed a resolution declining to collect any rate that may be levied under the Education Act, 1902, for the purposes of elementary education in Radnorshire; and, if so, will he say what steps he proposes to take in the matter; and whether it is the duty of the rate collector to show on the demand note various items which constitute the total sum demanded.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) I have seen a copy of a resolution passed by the guardians of the Knighton Union in May last stating that, owing to the enormous increase in the county rates, they could not see their way to collect such rates after the expiration of the then current half-year, and requesting the Councils of the three Counties in which the union is comprised to issue their precepts direct to the overseers of each parish in the union. It is the duty of a board of guardians to raise the moneys required by the precepts of the County Council; but, if they fail to do so, the County Council have ample power to obtain the money from the overseers with an addition of 10 per cent. The matter is not one in which I am empowered to interfere. With respect to the last part of the Question, the demand note for poor rate in the parishes in the union should show the items prescribed by the Order of the Local Government Board dated 13th April, 1897. Under the item "county contributions" should be stated the amount in the £ required for the expenses of the County Councils, but the amount in the £ required for the purposes of the Education Act, 1902, should not be separately shown.

Persons in Receipt of Parochial Relief.

MR. MANSFIELD (Lincolnshire, Spalding): To ask the President of the Local Government Board will he state the number of persons who were in receipt of parochial relief on 1st January, 1840, and on 1st January, 1903, and the proportion to the population.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) On the 1st January, 1903, there were 847,480 persons in receipt of relief in England and Wales, the proportion to the total population being 2·57 per cent. I cannot give the number for 1st January, 1840; but in 1849 (the earliest year for which I have figures for the 1st January) the number of persons in receipt of relief was 1,104,526. This total, however, is partly estimated. The proportion it bore to the total population is estimated at 6·36 per cent.

Resignations of Sorting Clerks and Telegraphists.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he can state the number of sorting clerks and telegraphists who resigned their position in the Civil Service during the twelve months ending December 1902, and the cause of their resignation; and whether he will grant a Return naming the offices from which these men resigned.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) I am unable to grant such a Return, because the cause of resignation is not always stated.

Anglo-Persian Convention.

MR. MOON (St. Pancras, N.): To ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs why the Anglo-Persian Convention of 9th February is signed on behalf of Persia, not by the Persian Minister who is the Plenipotentiary first named on the part of Persia in the Convention, but by a non-Persian; and why it is signed in French and Persian instead of English and Persian.

(*Answered by Lord Cranborne.*) The Persian text of the Anglo-Persian Convention was signed by the Persian Minister as First Plenipotentiary, the French text being signed by Sir A. Hardinge and by the Second Persian Plenipotentiary. This is according to precedent. There are also several precedents for the use of the French language instead of English in Conventions to which this country is one of the parties. In the present instance it was found to be more convenient and expeditious to employ the French language.

Sickness among Imported Natives at Johannesburg.

SIR BRAMPTON GURDON (Norfolk, N.): To ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the Foreign Office has received any intelligence as to death and sickness at Johannesburg among the natives imported from British Central Africa; and, if so, will steps be taken to prevent the further employment in the mines of labour from the same source.

(*Answered by Lord Cranborne.*) No intelligence has been received from official sources at the Foreign Office or Colonial Office, but inquiry will be made by telegraph.

Land Bill—Clause 92—Local Government Inspectors.

MR. O'SHEE (Waterford, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether it is intended that the Estates Commissioners, in carrying out Clause 92 of the Land Bill, shall have the assistance of one of the Inspectors of the Local Government Board who have been engaged at local inquiries under the Labourers Acts; and, if so, whether he will try to secure some one in more sympathy with the claims of the labourers than many of the Local Government Board Inspectors have shown themselves.

(*Answered by Mr. Atkinson.*) The provisions of Clause 92 do not require any alteration of the existing practice as to the functions of the Local Government Board. They will still have to inquire into the merits of the schemes recommended by the sanitary authorities. The present officers of the Board have, I believe, discharged their duties satisfactorily, and no change seems to be necessitated by the proposed provisions.

Irish Education Inquiry.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland what is the nature and scope of the inquiry which is now being conducted in connection with Irish education; whether its results will be communicated to the House; and, if so, when and in what form.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) An inspector of the English Board of Education has been asked to report how typical Irish elementary day schools compare with similarly circumstanced public elementary schools in England, as regards premises, equipment, staffing, and instruction; and to what causes differences in economy and efficiency appear to be chiefly due. Further inquiries will probably be necessary. The results of the investigation will be communicated to the House, but I cannot as yet pledge myself to the form or to the date of the communication.

Delay in Issue of War Medals.

MR. MANSFIELD: To ask the Secretary of State for War has his attention been called to the suicide of James Jones Homeyard, an ex-sergeant of 7th Dragoon Guards, who served during the South African War, and who left a letter to say that he had not yet received his medals; will he state the cause of the delay in issuing medals to the Reserve and Auxiliary forces when both the King's and Queen's medals have been issued to the Regulars; will he also say if the fresh medal rolls spoken of in the Army Order relating to the issue of the King's medal have been issued to all concerned, and, if not, who is responsible for the delay; and will he explain why medals have not been issued to those regiments of which the Commanding Officers have rendered full and amended medal rolls, and why medals have not been issued to those men who have applied for them as directed when they were discharged; and, if the medals are not ready, where has the delay been caused.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*) I am not aware of the unfortunate case mentioned, but no application for this man's medal can be traced. As I have already explained to the House, medal rolls are dealt with in order of receipt from units, and irrespectively of whether the men of the units have passed to the Reserve or not; further, only a certain number of rolls can be checked at a time, and there has been no delay. A general supply of medal roll forms for the King's medal was made to all concerned. The medal roll of the 7th Dragoon Guards was sent on the 13th May to Woolwich for the necessary action.

Recognition of Distinguished Service during South African War—Supplementary List of Officers.

SIR JOHN GORST (Cambridge University): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether Lord Kitchener has recently sent to the Commander-in-Chief a supplementary list of nine officers whose claims had been overlooked, and whom he now recommends for recognition for distinguished services whilst serving under his command in South Africa; if so, whether Lord Kitchener's recommendations will be carried out; and whether the names of the nine officers will be published in a supplementary *Gazette*.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*) I am not aware that Lord Kitchener has taken such action. The list of officers for distinction in connection with South Africa has long been closed.

38th South Staffordshire Regiment—Home Service and Barrack Accommodation.

MR. NORMAN (Wolverhampton, S.): To ask the Secretary of State for War if he will state how long the 38th (South Staffordshire) Regiment has been in South Africa; how long it has been under canvas; when it is expected that barracks will be provided for the regiment; how long the married non commissioned officers and men have been separated from their families, and when it is expected that their families will be sent out; and on what principle the regiments in South Africa were selected to be sent home.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*) Will the hon. Member kindly refer to my reply to a Question put yesterday on this subject by the hon. Member for Stafford.†

Volunteers in the Civil Service—Permission to attend Camp.

Sir THOMAS DEWAR: To ask the Secretary of State for War if he will state how many Volunteers are in the employment of the Government in a civil capacity; and what percentage have been granted permission to attend camps of instruction during the current year.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxxv., 1440.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*) This information could only be obtained by sending circular letters round to every Government Department calling for Returns, and I hesitate to call for special Returns in this matter.

Civil Surgeons and Army Appointments.

MR. SOAMES (Norfolk, S.): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether, in terminating the engagements of civil surgeons attached to the Royal Army Medical Corps, inasmuch as by the conditions of their appointment such surgeons are required to devote their whole time to Army duties, the services of those who hold civil appointments in addition will be dispensed with before those of gentlemen holding no such appointments.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*) The engagements of the civil surgeons who are devoting their whole time to military duty, and which are liable to termination on the services of an Army Medical Officer becoming available, are quite distinct from those of civil surgeons who do not devote their whole time to military duty, and which are liable to termination at any time, such appointments being made locally. The latter are available always to meet local difficulties, and are paid considerably less than the former. The proposal of the hon. Member would therefore throw additional expenditure on the State without any corresponding advantages.

Brigade of Guards—Deficient Strength.

MR. KENNETH BALFOUR (Christchurch): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether, in view of the fact that the Grenadier Guards are 228, the Coldstream Guards 409, and the Scots Guards 585 men below strength, and that the ranks are being constantly further depleted by men being transferred to the reserve, he can state if any steps are in contemplation to make good this deficiency; and whether he will consider the advisability of enlisting men for a period of only two years with the Colours.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*) The present deficiency in some of the battalions of the Guards arises in some degree from the diversion to the Irish Guards, who were raised in 1900, of men who previously joined other Guards regiments. Every effort will be made to obtain recruits, but the present establishment of the Guards is nearly 3,000 higher than it was seven years ago. Next year the extra pay will become effective to men who re-engage, which they have now no inducement to do, and there is no present intention of altering the terms of enlistment.

Publication of Report on Northern Nigeria and Trinidad Riot.

MR. HERBERT SAMUEL (Yorkshire, Cleveland): To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he will arrange for this year's Report on Northern Nigeria, and for the Report of the Commission on the riot in Trinidad, to be circulated before the discussion on the Colonial Estimates.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Chamberlain.*) The Report on Northern Nigeria has not yet been received, and it is therefore impossible to make a definite promise as to the date of its circulation, but as soon as it has been received steps will be taken to lay it before Parliament with the least possible delay. The Report of the Commission on the riot in Trinidad is already in the hands of hon. Members.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Weights carried by Cavalry Horses.

COLONEL LEGGE (St. George's, Hanover Square): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether any steps have yet been taken to reduce the weight carried on field service by cavalry horses; and, if so, whether he can state the weights now carried by the horses of the light, medium, and heavy cavalry, respectively.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): The whole question is under consideration.

COLONEL LEGGE: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that I put this Question two years ago and was then told it was under consideration.

MR. BRODRICK: Yes, Sir, but I am afraid this is a matter on which so many men hold different opinions that I cannot undertake to decide till I have the whole report before me.

Somaliland.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he has now received a statement from General Manning; and whether he is now in a position to make the statement as to what the immediate military operations must be.

MR. BRODRICK: I hope General Manning's despatches will be circulated by the end of the week. As I told the hon. Member on Monday† we are now in communication with General Egerton, and are carefully considering what future operations should be undertaken.

MR. DILLON: Did the right hon. Gentleman not promise on 30th April last ‡ to make a statement as to the future operations as soon as he had an opportunity of considering General Manning's despatches.

MR. BRODRICK: I cannot make a statement about the future operations until after the communications with General Egerton have enabled the Government to come to a conclusion.

MR. DILLON: Will the Government announce their intention before Parliament adjourns?

MR. BRODRICK: That must depend upon whether the information we receive from General Egerton enables us to come to a decision.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON (Cornwall, Camborne): What is the ultimate object of those military operations?

MR. BRODRICK: I think the hon. Member must know very well that the ultimate object is to prevent the Mullah from raiding our tribes, and so establishing disorder in the part of the country under our protection.

Native Labour in South Africa.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether a Royal Commission has been appointed in South Africa to inquire into the question of the alleged deficiency of native labour; and, if so, will he state who are the members of the Commission and the terms of reference.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): Is there not a Transvaal Commission as well?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN, Birmingham, W.): The right hon. Baronet will see that my answer covers his Question. There is no question of a Royal Commission, but there is a local Transvaal Commission recently appointed and an Inter-colonial Commission to be appointed in accordance with the resolution of the Bloemfontein Conference, which will meet at an early date, as to the membership of which I can only refer to my reply to the right hon. Member for the Forest of Dean Division on the 21st inst.† I have not yet received from Lord Milner the names of the members of the local Commission nor the exact terms of reference.

Hong Kong—Calf Lymph Supplies.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies, seeing that there is a public vaccine station at Hong-Kong, will he state why public vaccinators have to obtain supplies of calf lymph from Tonkin or Japan.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I am not aware of the necessity referred to by the hon. Member.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxxv., 1141.

‡ See (4) *Debates*, cxxi., 1004.

† See (4) *Debates*, cxxv., 1309.

MR. WEIR: Why has the vaccination station been closed ?

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I am not aware of it.

Sanitary Conditions of Hong-Kong.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he is aware that the recommendations contained in the report of the experts who were deputed to visit Hong-Kong for the purpose of inquiring into the sanitary condition of the colony have been only partially accepted by the Government of Hong-Kong; and, seeing that the recommendations have been materially modified in the Bill relating to public health and buildings which was recently passed by the Legislative Council, will he state whether the experts had an opportunity of reporting as to how far the terms of the Bill will meet the difficulties on which they were originally asked to report.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I am aware that the new Public Health and Building Ordinance of Hong-Kong does not embody all the suggestions made by Professor Simpson and Mr. Chadwick: and I am in correspondence with the Governor upon the subject.

Government Bacteriologist at Hong-Kong.

MR WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he is aware that it is the practice of the Government bacteriologist at Hong-Kong to demand a fee of twenty-five dollars from private individuals for the examination of any bird or animal suspected of having died of plague; and, if so, will arrangements be made for no fees to be charged by a public medical officer when plague is shown to be the cause of death.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I have no information, and shall be glad to receive privately from the hon. Member the authority on which he makes the suggestion.

MR. WEIR: I will supply it to the right hon. Gentleman. He has not answered the last part of my Question.

MR J. CHAMBERLAIN: Until I have the facts which the hon. Gentleman has promised me I cannot say what course I shall take.

India—Reduced Fares for Members of Parliament.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India, seeing that a Committee has recently been appointed to report on questions relating to the mail service with India, and certain questions in regard to the cost of passages of officers and Civil servants, will the question of securing reduced passage fares for Members of Parliament be considered.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON), Middlesex, Ealing): No.

MR. WEIR: Then do I understand the noble Lord to say Members of Parliament are not to have an opportunity of visiting India on the same terms as officers of the Army and Navy ?

[No answered was returned.]

Indian Cavalry—The Abolition of the Lance.

COLONEL LEGGE: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether he has yet received any communication from the Indian Government with regard to the abolition of the lance in the Indian cavalry.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: The Government of India have recently sanctioned the disuse of the lance by the cavalry of the Queen's Own Corps of Guides, but I have no information indicating that it is proposed to abolish the lance in other regiments of Indian cavalry.

India and the South African Garrison.

SIR HENRY FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether the proposal to charge the Indian Revenues with a proportion of the cost of the troops to be kept in South Africa has been approved of by him in Council; and whether the proposal, with such approval, has been forwarded to the Government of India.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: As I stated in reply to a Question put to me yesterday, this proposal has been considered by me in Council and has been referred to the Government of India for an expression of their opinion. Until that opinion has been received, no final decision will be arrived at by the Secretary of State in Council.

Indian Military Charges.

MR. LUNDON (Limerick, E.): On behalf of the hon. Member for the St. Patrick Division of Dublin, I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been called to the fact that India in future will have to pay £786,000 annually for military charges which Lord Curzon has stated that the Government of India has not asked for and does not approve; and, seeing that this increased expenditure arises as a result of the South African War, and that the protest of the Government of India, contained in Lord Curzon's telegram of March, 1902, was not submitted to the arbitrator, whether the case of the Indian taxpayers will be re-considered.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: I am aware of the fact stated in the first clause of the Question, but I am unable to accept the hon. Member's views as to the cause which has made the increased expenditure necessary. The statement in the last clause of the sentence is incorrect. The Viceroy's telegram of the 8th of March was included among the papers submitted to the Lord Chief Justice.

Presents for Indian Princes.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether the rule is still in operation precluding Indian officials from the acceptance in their private capacity of acceptance of valuable gifts from the princes and chiefs of India, and, if not, when has that rule been abrogated; and whether this rule, if still in existence, is binding on the Governor-General of India in common with other officials, and, if there be any exception in his case, on what grounds is the exception based.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: The rules forbid the acceptance of presents by Indian officials of all ranks except with the express sanction of the Governor-General in Council. These rules do not apply to the exchange of presents between high officials and native chiefs in their ceremonial intercourse.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: Has not the Governor-General in his private capacity accepted a valuable present from the Maharajah of Benares.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: I have no information on that subject.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): Are the presents thus received always sold for the benefit of the Government?

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: Yes.

SIR J. FERGUSSON (Manchester, N.E): And when a present is received from an Indian prince or chief, one of equal value is made to him.

LORD GEORGE HAMILTON: Yes, there is always an interchange of presents on ceremonial occasions.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: The money derived from the sale of the presents being paid in to the Treasury.

Congo Natives—Protection Commisson.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether his attention has been called to the references in the Belgian Chamber of Representatives to his statement concerning the Natives Protection Commission appointed by the Congo Government in 1896; and whether he will furnish the House with any information he may have received concerning the alleged meetings and Reports of the Commission.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS, LORD CRANBORNE, Rochester): My attention has been called to the references in the Belgian Chamber mentioned by the right hon. Baronet. The words I used in this House scarcely justified the description which was given of them. There is no objection to laying all the information we have upon the Table, or I will send it privately to the right hon. Baronet if that would be sufficient.

Russia and the Afghan Frontier.

*Sir CHARLES DILKE: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether there has been any further communication with Russia as to Afghanistan since his reply of 20th October last as to the proposal of Russia to establish direct relations with Afghanistan in respect to frontier matters.

Lord CRANBORNE: Further communications have passed on this subject with the Russian Government, but I am not at present in a position to give the House any information with regard to them.

Permanent Sugar Commission—British Representatives.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, in what capacity have Sir H. G. Bergne, Mr. T. J. Pittar, Mr. G. Martineau, Mr. E. C. Ozanne, and Mr. A. Pearson, respectively, taken part in the proceedings of the Permanent Sugar Commission at Brussels; by whom were they respectively appointed to take such part; what salary and what sum for expenses is paid or to be paid to each of them; and in what Vote or Votes are such salaries or expenses to be found.

Lord CRANBORNE: Sir H. G. Bergne acted as British delegate; the other gentlemen as assistant delegates. They were appointed by the Secretary of State. Sir H. Bergne is receiving pay at the rate of £400 a year (in addition to his pension) and Mr. Martineau a retaining fee of £300 for one year. Both appointments are for one year only. No salaries have been assigned to Mr. Pittar and Mr. Pearson in addition to their salaries as Commissioner of Customs and principal clerk in the Colonial Office respectively. With the exception of Mr. Ozanne (who is paid by the India Office) each of the above gentlemen have received travelling and subsistence allowances during absence from this country. The above sums are paid from the Diplomatic Vote, sub-head Special Missions.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES asked if there was any precedent for paying a salary to a pensioned official under such circumstances?

Lord CRANBORNE replied that a full salary was not paid—the pension was taken into account.

British Policy in Egypt.

Mr. WEIR: I beg to ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the policy of His Majesty's Government in regard to Egypt is still as indicated in Lord Granville's despatch to Sir Evelyn Baring, of 4th January, 1884, to the effect that, in important questions where the administration and safety of Egypt are at stake, it should be made clear to Egyptian Ministers and Governors of Provinces that His Majesty's Government must insist on the adoption of the policy which they recommend, and that it will be necessary that those Ministers who do not follow this course should cease to hold their offices.

Lord CRANBORNE: There is no change in the policy of His Majesty's Government with regard to Egyptian administration.

Taxation Statistics.

Mr. HERBERT SAMUEL (Yorkshire, Cleveland): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will state what is the amount of taxation, excluding sums derived from the post offices, per head of the population in the United States, Germany, and the United Kingdom.

*The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Ritchie, Croydon): The amount of taxation raised by Imperial officers for Imperial and local purposes in the United Kingdom per head of population was £2 9s. 6d. for 1898–9, which was the last normal year, and is estimated at £3 2s. 4d. for the current year, which still bears some expenditure connected with the war. Figures purporting to give the *per capita* calculation for the United States and Germany are published in various works of reference, but I think the great difference between the financial systems of the different countries makes the comparison very misleading.

British Steamers for East Africa.

MR. EVELYN CECIL (Aston Manor): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether, in accordance with the opinion expressed by the Steamship Subsidies Committee, the establishment of a direct British line to East Africa has been favourably considered; and whether tenders will be shortly invited.

THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, Worcestershire, E.): The subject is under consideration, and I am not in a position to announce any decision.

Fiscal Inquiry—Reciprocity Treaties.

MR. NORMAN (Wolverhampton, S.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will give examples of goods from foreign countries entering other foreign countries under reciprocity treaties on more favourable terms than similar British goods enter those countries.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central): The information asked for will be included in the Return ordered by the House on the 2nd instant. The Return will be issued as soon as possible.

Trade Organisations and the Inquiry.

SIR CHARLES McLAREN (Leicestershire, Bosworth): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether any information is being asked for by his Department from the Chambers of Commerce, trade societies, and trades' unions of the United Kingdom as to the effect of preferential tariffs and differential duties upon the interests and the trades they represent.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: The answer is in the negative.

SIR CHARLES McLAREN: May I ask whether, considering the importance of the subject, the right hon. Gentleman will take steps to see that this is done.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I think it would be very undesirable to address questions on this subject to Chambers of Commerce.

SIR CHARLES McLAREN: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the trades unions and Chambers of Commerce have been considering the subject and have passed resolutions.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: That is a very different thing from the Government putting official questions to Chambers of Commerce.

Lascars on British Vessels.

SIR MANCHERJEE BHOWNAGGREE (Bethnal Green, N.E.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether, in view of the unanimous Report of the Mercantile Marine Committee, presided over by Sir Francis Jeune, in favour of the continuance of the employment of Lascars on British vessels, he intends to take any steps to remove the difficulties thrown in the way of such employment by the setting aside, in virtue of a judicial decision given on that point, of the provision as to space contained in the legislation of the Government of India.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: Lascars on British ships running to the United Kingdom are in exactly the same position in the matter of the space to be allotted to them as other British seamen, and I do not see my way to propose the legislation which would be necessary to give effect to the suggestion of my hon. friend.

Destruction of Fish at Billingsgate.

MR. DOUGHTY (Great Grimsby): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he has received any reply to his inquiry from the Fishmongers' Company on the subject of the destruction of fish food during the summer season; and whether, seeing that the fish so destroyed is what is known as immature fish and such as the Fishmongers' Company and the trade have constantly urged Parliament by legislation to make it an illegal act to offer for sale, he will introduce legislation on the subject at an early date.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: In reply to my inquiries the Fishmongers' Company informed me that the fish destroyed last year at Billingsgate was only about one half per centum of the whole amount received at the market, and that, as stated in my hon. friend's Question, the greater proportion of the fish so destroyed was immature fish. As my hon. friend is aware, a Bill prohibiting the sale of immature fish was introduced by the President of the Board of Trade in 1900, but it was decided by the Committee to whom the Bill was referred that it would not be expedient to pass the Bill without further inquiry and investigation. Having regard to the international investigations which are being conducted, and to the proposed transfer of the fishery branch to the Board of Agriculture, I am not in a position to promise any legislation on the subject.

Non-Provided School Managers.

MR. MANSFIELD (Lincolnshire, Spalding): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Education will he say how many non-provided school managers have received a copy of the Draft Final Order No. 194; whether all the persons who have, or will elect, or be elected representative managers will have to fulfil the conditions relating to qualified persons and qualified subscribers; and will he say whether the persons elected as managers must also be qualified subscribers; and, if so, what course will be taken in electing managers where there are no qualified subscribers.

THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (Sir WILLIAM ANSON, Oxford University): Copies of the Draft Final Order have been sent to all the Managers of the Schools named in the Second Schedule. The representative managers must be "qualified persons" within the meaning of Clause 6 of the Order, but they need not be "qualified subscribers" within the meaning of Clause 7. The electors of representative managers must be "qualified subscribers" but need not be "qualified persons." By the second paragraph of Clause 5, in the event of there being less than eight qualified subscribers, the representative managers are to be co-opted by the other foundation managers.

Building in the Island of Lewis.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate if he will state the number of houses which have been erected in the Island of Lewis under the by-laws as to the regulation of buildings which were made by the Lewis District Committee of the County Council of Ross and Cromarty, and approved by the Local Government Board in December, 1900; and will he say how many fever-stricken or insanitary houses in the island have been destroyed by order of the local authorities.

*The LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. A. GRAHAM MURRAY, Buteshire): Thirty houses have been erected under the by-laws referred to by the hon. Member. One insanitary fever-stricken house was destroyed with the owner's consent. No house has been destroyed by order of the local authority.

Congestion in the Highlands.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury, in view of the fact that the advertisements of the Congested Districts Board intimating that they were prepared to negotiate for the purchase of land for the purpose of the Congested Districts Act have not resulted in the offer of suitable properties, will he state what steps the Government propose to take to acquire land for the migration of crofters and cottars and the extension of crofters' holdings.

*MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY: The Congested Districts Board are at all times prepared to negotiate for the acquisition of land for the purposes mentioned by the hon. Member. No new steps are contemplated by the Government.

Bee-keeping in Ireland.

MR. BOLAND (Kerry, S.): I beg to ask the Attorney-General for Ireland whether any Bill has been drafted by the Department of Agriculture, or whether any proposal has been submitted to the Department, by which powers would be conferred enabling the proper authorities to stamp out the disease of foul brood in bees, in view of the fact that the necessity exists for prompt action if this industry is to be preserved.

THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL FOR IRELAND (Mr. ATKINSON Londonderry, N.): The Department has not drafted a Bill on this subject, but it is in correspondence with the English Board of Agriculture with a view to the preparation of a Bill. My right hon. friend has already stated that it is not practicable to introduce such legislation this session.

Police and Public at Ardrahan.

MR. DUFFY (Galway, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that at the Petty Sessions Court held at Ardrahan, County Galway, recently, a number of peasants were summoned by the police for disorderly conduct; that it was sworn to the satisfaction of the magistrates that a policeman named Lyons provoked the row by hustling the people about when under the influence of drink; that the magistrates adjudicating censured the police for their action on the occasion, and dismissed all the summonses except in the case of two men who admitted they were provoked into committing an assault by the action of Lyons; and, if so, whether, in view of the relations existing between Sergeant Walker, Constable Lyons, and the people of the district, he will take steps to have them transferred to some other district.

MR. ATKINSON (for Mr. WYNDHAM): The prosecutions referred to arose out of a disturbance at a fair near Ardrahan on the 22nd ultimo. Constable Lyons was assaulted on the occasion, and was six days non-effective from the injuries he received. Sergeant Walker and another constable who went to his assistance were also assaulted. Two of the defendants, who had been remanded in custody for periods of 14 and 4 days respectively, were fined in sums of 20s. each and costs. The cases against the other defendants were dismissed without prejudice. It was alleged that Constable Lyons was under the influence of drink, but the allegation was not borne out by the evidence. The action of the police was not censured by the magistrates. Sergeant Walker was complimented by the solicitor for the accused for the fair manner in which he gave his evidence, and the attack upon the police was admitted by one of the accused to have been preconcerted. The reply to the concluding inquiry is in the negative.

MR. DUFFY: The right hon. Gentleman says the constable was non-effective for six days after the assault. Is he aware that on the day after the assault he was well enough to escort the accused to Galway Prison, a distance of fourteen miles?

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! It is impossible to discuss these disputed matters of detail by Question and Answer.

MR. DUFFY: Seeing that the constable was censured, will the right hon. Gentleman take the latter part of my Question into consideration.

MR. ATKINSON: I have said they were not censured.

Labourers' Cottages in the Listowel Union.

MR. FLAVIN (Kerry, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state the total number of labourers' cottages built in the Listowel Union, the number in course of erection, and also the number at present proposed to be built.

MR. ATKINSON (for Mr. WYNDHAM): On the 31st March last 255 cottages had been built, and twenty-nine more were in course of erection in this union. The District Council proposes to make a scheme for additional cottages, but the number has not yet been decided upon. I refer the hon. Member to Return No. 198 of this session, which will give him all the information he desires.

Fiscal Inquiry—Taxation on Food.

MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL (Oldham): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the Secretary of State for the Colonies has submitted any definite proposals to the Cabinet to serve as a basis for the fiscal inquiry upon which they are now engaged; whether, in order to give a preference to the colonies, these proposals include a tax on bread, and to what extent; whether they include a tax on meat (including bacon), butter, cheese, eggs, and fruit, and, in each case, to what extent.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): I think my hon. friend will agree with me that this is a Question which clearly I ought not to answer. The inquiry, as I have stated more than once, is a Cabinet inquiry, and it would be an evil precedent to give details of the manner in which that inquiry is to be conducted.

MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL: Will the right hon. gentleman give an assurance that no tax on beef or mutton is contemplated?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: My hon. friend seems hardly to realise that we are making an inquiry. Until we know what the result of inquiry is. it would surely be premature to answer that question.

MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL: May I ask the right hon. Gentleman how we can participate in the inquiry if we are not informed of its scope and of its nature?

[No answer was returned.]

MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL: May I ask whether the Colonial Secretary can give us any information?

[No answer was returned.]

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND, (Clare, E.): Ask his brother Arthur.

Chambers of Commerce and the Fiscal Inquiry.

MR. MANSFIELD: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury have any steps been taken, or will any steps be taken, to place before the Chambers of Commerce of this country the particulars of the inquiry into the fiscal policy of this country, with a view of securing the opinion of commercial interests upon that part of our fiscal policy upon which the Government desires information.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Of course the representations of the Chambers of Commerce will be carefully considered by His Majesty's Government. In addition to that, I think it is extremely probable that specific questions will be addressed to them.

Industrial Methods.

MR. HERBERT SAMUEL: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the inquiry now proceeding into the fiscal policy is solely, or is chiefly, for the purpose of obtaining statistical information; whether any investigation is being made into the extent to which the success of American and German manufacturers is due to the excellence of the machinery and industrial methods employed; and, if so, whether the results of such investigation will be laid before the House.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have dwelt at length on the general objects of the inquiry. I have nothing to add to my previous statements.

Colonial Legislative Independence.

MR. BLACK (Banffshire): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the Government has determined that as a condition of their enjoying preferential treatment from the mother country the self-governing colonies shall be called upon to surrender some of the independence at present possessed by them as regards fiscal, industrial, or commercial legislation.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The answer is in the negative.

Government Departments and the Fiscal Inquiry.

MR. NORMAN: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he will state whether the permanent heads of Departments of State have been requested to prepare statements upon different questions arising in the fiscal inquiry now proceeding; and, if so, whether these reports will ultimately be supplied to Members.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: As I have before stated, the Government are making use, as it is obvious they must do, of the various Departments. More than that I cannot say.

Malta.

MR. BOLAND: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he can arrange to set down the Vote for the Colonial Office at such a time as to afford an opportunity of discussing the suspension of the constitution of Malta.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I cannot make any definite promise on this point, but probably the Colonial Office Vote will be the first order this day week.

Artillery Volunteer Armaments.

MR. SEYMOUR ORMSBY-GORE (Lincolnshire, Gainsborough): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if any opportunity will be given this session of discussing the re-armament of the Artillery Volunteers.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Yes, Sir, I hope an opportunity will be found before Supply closes for putting down this and other Army Votes for discussion.

Imperial Defence.

MR. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he will furnish an account of the total cost of Imperial Defence, including India and the Crown Colonies, and excluding the self-governing colonies; also the total cost of Diplomatic and Consular Service to Great Britain and Ireland.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I think it is possible to supply an Answer to the hon. Gentleman, but it would be more convenient to put it down as an unstarred Question or to move for the information in the form of a Return, which would of course be granted.

The Death of the Pope.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: I desire to ask the Prime Minister, in accordance with private notice, whether the flag on the Victoria Tower of Parliament has been half-masted as a mark of respect to the memory of His Holiness, Leo XIII., following precedent in similar cases in the past, and as has been done with regard to the American Flag, by order of President Roosevelt, all over the United States.

MR. VICTOR CAVENDISH (Derbyshire, W.) rose to answer the Question, whereupon—

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND said: As this is a matter of international interest, courtesy, and sentiment, I think I may claim an answer from the Prime Minister.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have asked my hon. friend to reply.

MR. VICTOR CAVENDISH: The answer is in the negative. There has been no rule in these matters, and I can find no precedent which exactly applies. The question of making rules concerning the flying of the flag at half-mast will be considered.

MR. MALCOLM (Suffolk, Stowmarket): As this mark of respect was paid by us to the memory of the King of Italy, will my hon. friend consult Lord Windsor and the Prime Minister as to the advisability of creating a precedent to enable similar tribute to be paid to the spiritual head of a Church to whom spiritual obedience is given by some millions of His Majesty's subjects?

MR. VICTOR CAVENDISH: I shall be glad to bring this subject before the Commissioner of Works, but it is impossible to make any statement on the subject at the present moment.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: In view of the fact that in every part of the world, and especially in every part of the English-speaking world, the greatest respect was shown to the memory of his holiness, will the Prime Minister consider the advisability of giving the mark of respect I have signified on the day at least of the funeral?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The hon. Member, I hope, will recognise that this is not a question of respect for the late Pope, the respect for whom, I believe, is universal. It does not turn upon that at all. It turns upon the precedent which we ought to establish with regard to all such cases, and the precedent must evidently have effect, whether the individual in whose memory the flag is lowered is respected or not. It turns not in respect of his personal character, but on his position. We must have some general rule applicable to all such cases irrespective of sentiments we may feel in a particular case. Otherwise we shall be involved in constant difficulties at future periods.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND: Is the right hon. gentleman aware of the fact that on all Government buildings throughout the whole of the colonies of the British Empire this mark of respect was paid without the slightest hesitation.

[No answer was returned.]

Mr. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): In dealing with this very important matter, will the Prime Minister consider the advisability of trying to induce the Corporation of Dublin to fly the flag on top of the City Hall in honour of the King's visit?

[No answer was returned.]

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): Will the Prime Minister tell us what business he proposes to take to-morrow and next week?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I propose to put down as the first order to-morrow the Second Reading of the Military Lands Bill. That, I think, will meet with general approval. The second order will be the Naval Works Bill, Committee, and the third order the Employment of Children Bill. I propose, as at present advised, to put down the Second Reading of the South African Loans Bill as the first order on Monday. On Tuesday I shall propose to suspend the 12 o'clock Rule, and the rest of that day and the whole of Wednesday will be devoted to the Second Reading of the Sugar Bounties Bill.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I would like to remind the right hon. Gentleman of what was said the other day as to the undesirability that the debate on the Sugar Bounties Bill should be curtailed by the discussion of the Motion to suspend the 12 o'clock Rule. It is also exceedingly undesirable that the debate should be taken at an hour when it cannot be fully reported.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I have endeavoured to make an arrangement which I hope will be convenient to the House. My original idea was that the morning and evening sittings of one day would give adequate time for the discussion of the Sugar Bounties Bill, the principle of which has been admitted.

Mr. LOUGH (Islington, W.): No, no!

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: The principle of which has been admitted by a Resolution of the House passed last session. But I understood that the right hon. Gentleman's view was that one day would not be sufficient. I have endeavoured to meet that view by saying that, although I propose to suspend the 12 o clock Rule on Tuesday, I do not propose to confine the debate on the Second Reading of the Sugar Bounties Bill to that day. I shall be glad to give the whole of Wednesday, in addition to the part of Tuesday not occupied by the discussion on the Motion to suspend the 12 o'clock Rule. I hope the right hon. Gentleman will feel that that goes a long way to meet his views.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I do not know how far it goes, but it certainly does not meet my views, as a large part of the first day will be occupied in discussing questions that will be raised on the Motion to suspend the 12 o'clock Rule.

Mr. LOUGH: The right hon. Gentleman really gains nothing by that plan. Why not take the Bill first and the suspension of the 12 o'clock Rule debate later; the discussion would not be unduly prolonged.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: If hon. Gentlemen do not wish to discuss the Motion for the suspension of the 12 o'clock Rule, which I have put off until a late period in the session, the whole of the two days can be devoted to the Second Reading of the Sugar Convention Bill.

MUNICIPAL TRADING.

Report, with Minutes of Evidence, from the Joint Committee, brought up, and read.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 270.]

SELECTION (STANDING COMMITTEES).

Mr. HALSEY reported from the Committee of Selection: That they had discharged the following Members from the Standing Committee on Trade (including Agriculture and Fishing), Shipping, and Manufactures; Mr. Lonsdale, Mr. O'Malley, Mr. Kilbride, Mr. Flavin, and Mr. O'Mara; and had appointed in substitution: Sir Charles Cayzer, Mr. Young, Mr. J. P. Farrell, Mr. William M'Killop, and Mr. Boland.

Mr. HALSEY further reported from the Committee of Selection: That they had discharged the following Member from the Standing Committee on Law and Courts of Justice, and Legal Procedure: Mr. Munro Ferguson; and had appointed in substitution: Mr. Haldane.

Reports to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC PETITIONS COMMITTEE.

Seventh Report brought up, and read; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

MERCHANT SHIPPING ACT (1894) AMENDMENT BILL.

"To amend The Merchant Shipping Act, 1894, with respect to Passenger and Emigrant Ships, and with respect to safety," presented by Mr. Runciman; supported by Sir Charles Cayzer, Sir Robert Ropner, Mr. Rea, and Colonel Denny; to be read a second time upon Monday, 3rd August, and to be printed. [Bill 295.]

SALE OF BUTTER BILL.

Reported, with an Amended Title, from the standing Committee on Trade, &c.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 269.]

Minutes of the Proceedings of the Standing Committee to be printed. [No. 269.]

Bill, as amended (in the Standing Committee), to be taken into consideration upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 293.]

THE HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. WALTER LONG, Bristol, S.): In asking leave to introduce a Bill to amend the law relating to the housing of the working classes, I should explain that the measure is the redemption of the promise I made during the debate on the King's Speech to deal with some of the minor points in regard to which difficulties have arisen under the existing Housing of the Working Classes Acts. The Bill proposes the extension of the period of repayment of loans from 60 to 80 years, a discretion being still reserved to the Local Government Board as to particular cases. The period of 80 years will apply to loans for the purchase of freehold land, but a shorter period, according to the discretion of the Department, will be applied to loans for buildings. It is also proposed by Order in Council to transfer to the Local Government Board the duties which are now divided between the Home Office and the Local Government Board. Where rehousing obligations are cast upon local authorities or individual owners, the Standing Orders which now have to be inserted in each individual Bill will be made applicable to all cases under the Housing Acts. The central authority will be empowered to act where the local authority fails to move when a recommendation has been made by the medical officer of health. An endeavour is made to improve the procedure for approving schemes. If an order proposes to take land by compulsion and no owner concerned objects, that order will have the effect of a Provisional Order or Act of Parliament without any further procedure. But if there is any objection, the order will follow the ordinary course of a Provisional Order Bill and will have to receive the assent of Parliament. It is proposed to invest the Local Government Board with power to modify schemes presented by local authorities. At present the Department possesses no such power, and the absence of it frequently tends to great delay and difficulties. The powers with regard to closing orders are strengthened, and the difficulties which now exist with reference to cases of demolition of condemned buildings are dealt with. At present the cost of the demolition of condemned buildings sometimes renders it impossible for a local authority to proceed in the matter, and by the Bill it is proposed to give the local authority the power to recover from the owner the excess of cost after the sale of materials as they would recover a civil debt. The local authority is also placed in the position of a landlord in cases of condemned buildings or buildings taken over by the local authority. The absence from the local authority of the powers of a landlord to eject has often proved a serious difficulty, and the Bill proposes to invest it with these powers of eviction. Power is also given under the Bill to local authorities to provide shops as a part of the provision of dwelling or lodging accommodation. Various other minor matters are dealt with in the Bill, which it is hoped will remove the practical difficulties which have been found to exist. I introduce the Bill as a modest and, I hope, non-controversial measure, as a step in the right direction, and I trust the House will consider it in that spirit, and enable us to place it on the Statute-book.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That leave be given to bring in a Bill to amend the Law relating to the Housing of the Working Classes."—(*Mr. Walter Long.*)

Mr. EUGENE WASON (Clackmannan and Kinross): Will the Bill apply to Scotland ?

Mr. WALTER LONG: No.

Question agreed to. Bill ordered to be brought in by Mr. Walter Long, Mr. Attorney-General, and Mr. Grant Lawson.

HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES (No. 2) BILL.

"To amend the Law relating to the Housing of the Working Classes," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Tuesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 296.]

SUPPLY [19th Allotted Day.]

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. J. W. Lowther (Cumberland, Penrith) in the chair.

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS ESTIMATES, 1903-4.

Class II.

Motion made, and question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £34,887, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending the 31st day of March 1904, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Department of His Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs."

*Sir CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean) said the recent Royal visit to Paris, and President Loubet's visit to this country, as well as the speech made by the Prime Minister on the previous night to the French Senators and Deputies under that very roof, appeared to him to be strangely inconsistent with the policy which the Government had on the whole pursued towards Germany during the years that they had been in power. He wished to call the attention of the House, as an example of the extraordinary shiftiness and variety of their foreign policy to their relations with Germany which had brought out these startling changes in a most formidable form, in which they had been extremely damaging to this country. After they got their great majority in 1895—a majority which seemed to be entirely disappearing in another place—the Government's policy towards Germany was apparently one of seeking for a military alliance with that Power, and of constituting ourselves virtually members of the Triple Alliance. That was really a continuance of the policy of Lord Salisbury between 1886 and 1892. It was, although he believed the people of this country were opposed to it, and that it was contrary to the interests of the country, a perfectly intelligible policy. In the Zanzibar cession, the Heligoland cession, and in our conduct with regard to military attachès at foreign Courts, as well as in Lord Salisbury's language when he spoke of "good tidings of great joy," we showed that we considered ourselves members of a Triple Alliance. That policy was in itself a reversal of Disraeli's policy, who on two occasions refused proffers of a military alliance between Germany and this country. One very prominent member of the Cabinet made two great speeches in the country, in one of which he pointed to the possibility of an alliance with Germany being in our interest, and in the other of which, without specifically naming Germany, he said it was in the essential interest of this country that we should have a definite alliance with a great military power. That policy was continued for a long time; but since then, upon various excuses, some prominent Members of the Government had used language of absolute ferocity towards Germany. There had been a change backwards and forwards so sharp and startling that he could only explain it on the hypothesis that there was no settled foreign policy on the part of the Government, and that they never really thought out those great considerations which lay at the base of all the foreign relations of Great Britain. Within a few months after the Government had encouraged the use of extraordinary language towards Germany, there came the startling examples of what he should call cringing to that Power in connection with the search for contraband on a German vessel, for which we not only apologised, but made a present of a service of plate, and in the case of Venezuela and the Baghdad Railway. In regard to Venezuela, the whole country, irrespective of Party, now recognised that the course pursued was contrary to what ought to be the keystone of our policy—good relations with the United States. Those examples came very shortly after we had had a warning to mind our own business and not to commit acts derogatory to the dignity of this country in the course that Germany took towards us with regard to the Anglo-German Agreement concluded at the time of the General Election of 1900. That agreement was paraded by the Government, incredible though it might seem, as being a sort of alliance with Germany against Russia in regard to China, as though Germany was ever likely to depart from what had always been her settled policy—an alliance with Russia which would guarantee her possession of the territories wrested from France.

*THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Lord CRANBORNE, Rochester) asked by whom that claim was made.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE said it was so paraded in all the speeches after the General Election.

*LORD CRANBORNE: Not by me.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE said No, not by the noble Lord, who was most careful in the language he used; but in all the speeches of hon. Gentlemen opposite it was claimed that the policy of the Government had triumphantly concluded this agreement with Germany, which placed our policy in China on a perfectly satisfactory footing. Immediately after that agreement was signed Count von Bülow used language which was contemptuous to this country. Whatever might have been the real nature of that agreement—that meaningless agreement — the explanation was diametrically opposed to our interests, and it was put before the German Parliament as a triumph over our view. Immediately after that policy had been pursued we cringed to Germany in the cases of Venezuela and the Bagdad Railway. He would not go into depths of Chinese policy which the Committee, he thought, had very often been somewhat tired of in the past. He would only say that the present Government had constantly put before the country two alternative policies in China. One was the policy of the open door, and the other was to maintain our sphere of influence in the Yang-tzse Valley. The first-mentioned meant the open door in Manchuria, and in the territories where Germany and Russia were trading, and when that did not succeed the Government fell back on the sphere-of-influence doctrine, and they put before the House the great things which were likely to be done in the Yang-tzse Valley. So far from helping us in the Yang-tzse sphere, Count von Bülow had acted as if the meaning of that agreement was that we expressly renounced that we had any special interests in the Yang-tzse Valley. Count von Bülow's view had undoubtedly prevailed in practice, and that was the real test, because the great lines of railway were being constructed at the present moment by those who in Chinese policy were hostile to ourselves. The great line cutting through China from North to South had gone into unfriendly hands. When he said unfriendly hands, that had two meanings. It meant that the whole of the material for the construction of the lines was brought from foreign and not from British sources, and it meant that we should be exposed to difficulties in regard to our trade when these lines begin to work.

Sir Claude Macdonald gave the Government encouragement. The noble Lord read to the House triumphantly on two occasions Sir Claude Macdonald's despatch, stating that we did not come out second best with regard to the railways in China. On 16th June this year there was a debate in the Lords on this question, and on that occasion it was shown that the Pekin Syndicate, and the British and Chinese Corporation, which represented the largest British trading firms in China, were working in agreement with each other; and these bodies, representing all British interests concerned, had not succeeded in obtaining the very simple concession they asked as necessary to their trade. He meant, of course, the line coming down to a point opposite Nankin—a line essential to the coal and iron trade in the future. The noble Lord told the House that the Government were insisting on obtaining the concession. The Germans were setting up a claim not only to make all the railways in the province of Shantung, which was sometimes more than the sphere, but a claim over the railway construction in the Hinterland of Shantung, and to bring the coal and iron down the valley of the Yellow River to Kiao Chou, the seizure of which originally by Germany was the signal for all those terrible events which happened in China contrary to our interests. German influence at Pekin had been used steadily against our interests and had tended to bring the coal and iron trade of China down to their own port. The noble Lord had told the House for years that the Government were insisting on obtaining a British line opposite Nankin, but no advance whatever had been made towards obtaining it. The great lines across the Yang-tzse Valley had been made against our interests, and Russian and German influence had been used against our views. It was stated that the Canton-Hankow portion of the road was to be made by an American syndicate. He thought it would have proved to our interest that it should be made by American hands, but this concession had passed into the hands of Belgians, a result which again had been brought about by German influence being used at Pekin in a manner hostile to our views. The noble Lord had told the House on several occasions the circumstances attending the evacuation of Shanghai. There also German influence was used in a manner hostile to ours. The German Government addressed to the Chinese Government a note which, instead of conciliating us, was calculated to destroy the privileged position in Shanghai, which by reason of the overwhelming greater importance of our settlement there we had always enjoyed in that part of China. There was a matter which the noble Lord regarded as one of the great triumphs of our policy, and he had again and again repeated it to the House. He told them repeatedly that the successor of Sir Robert Hart would be a British nominee as long as British trade was predominant in China. The Pekin correspondent of *The Times*, who was always contradicted at the moment, but whose statements had the knack of coming true after a time, told them what had taken place.

He would now deal not with hypothesis or doubtful points, but with actual facts. It was a fact that at this moment in Manchuria and Mongolia German traders and German commercial travellers were able to travel, while our commercial travellers were not able to travel, and our traders were not able to settle and carry on trade. Through the good offices of their Consul in Vladivostock Germans were allowed that privilege, and they were setting up their houses. Our people were refused leave to reside there, and only persons supposed to be friendly to the Russian Government were allowed to travel there. The notion that we could get German help against Russia was a dream which had constantly disturbed our policy, led the Government to make agreements, and made members of the Government give triumphant and, as he thought, foolish speeches in the country about what they had secured. It was pretty generally recognised now that this notion of a German alliance against Russia was a dream, and it had almost disappeared, at all events, from the minds of sensible people, just as had happened in regard to the notion of another great alliance—namely, that of an Italian alliance against France, which was put forward especially by the Admiralty as almost a settled matter. What he complained of in these extraordinary shifts of Government policy—now abusing Germany and then cringing to her—was that, after their experience of German policy in the Yang-tzse Valley, after what had happened in the underhand conduct of Germany to us in Shanghai, after cringing to Germany in the matters of Venezuela and the Baghdad Railway, in November last at the Lord Mayor's banquet the Prime Minister alluded to these statements as "fantastic inventions." There were no words to show whether the right hon. Gentleman meant the statements in regard to Venezuela or whether he meant the statements in regard to the Baghdad railway negotiations, but as a matter of fact neither the statements made at that time as to Venezuelan or those regarding the Baghdad railway were fantastic inventions. They were exactly accurate. There was a storm of ill-feeling aroused by those transactions. His case was that the storm of popular indignation under the circumstances was quite right and wise. It was a well founded storm of popular indignation. With regard to the bearing of the Venezuela case on the Monroe doctrine, which in his belief was a British interest, it was the storm of popular disapproval and not the policy of the Government which prevented the harm that would otherwise have been done. It was the fact that the country was unanimously against the Government with regard to its criminal folly in the Venezuelan affair which was the reason that we retained the friendship of the United States. The dates in the Venezuela case were put before the House in the debate on the Address and by Lord Rosebery in another place. He thought he was justified in saying—he was quite sure he could prove it if anyone should contest the statement—that the statements as to the Venezuela dates were not fantastic inventions, but only matters of fact which were before them at the time and which the history of the subject afterwards laid before them in the Blue-books conclusively proved. The Baghdad arrangements were of some moment. The Government denied that they were Government arrangements at all. They had said that they were arrangements made between Germany and great financiers in this country of which the Government approved. These arrangements were published in this country on Saturday, 8th November, two days before the Government spoke of "fantastic inventions" at the Lord Mayor's banquet, and they proved to be exactly according to the statements made at that time, and what was asked by the German Emperor proved to be exactly that which the Government had agreed to, including the suggestion of the future mail contract, and all the conditions with regard to the representation of the financial interest on the governing board which were afterwards stated to this House. The Prime Minister told them that these were "imaginary negotiations," that they were "strange bargains," and that the whole story was one of "fantastic invention," although the Venezuela agreement was concluded within three days of that time and the Baghdad railway negotiations were as exposed by the hon. Member for King's Lynn.

Might he make a general observation as to the action of Germany up up to that date? Many of them had always been hostile to a permanent arrangement with Germany, because our objects and German objects were not the same. The objects of Germany were friendship with Russia and the maintenance of her conquests from France. Our greatest interest, as was said on an historical occasion by Lord Derby, was peace. He should have said, up to a few months ago, that the next greatest interest of Great Britain was free trade, in which we had no sympathy with Germany. Our objects and German objects were, therefore, not the same, and when an effort was made to set up common action where the objects were not the same, great risks were run of offending other Powers and of compromising our principles—if indeed it could be said that we had any principles at all left. These facts constituted a *primâ facie* case for the public distrust, which undoubtedly existed with regard to an arrangement with Germany. He, however, thought they did not in the least justify an unjust hue and cry being raised against Germany. What he complained of was that when they had cringed and allowed themselves to be hoodwinked, while they represented that they had secured a great triumph which was no triumph at all, and when public opinion had been excited against Germany by their own speeches, proceedings, and unwise acts, they were obliged to take advantage of that cry which they had ignobly raised. The Government appeared suddenly to have remembered Canada. They had forgotten Canada for many years, but they suddenly discovered that Canada had a grievance against Germany, and they said: "Hullo! Let us take advantage of the hue and cry against Germany, and let us put forward the grievance of Canada." In 1897 we had ourselves, on behalf of Canada, said that Canada was a fiscal entity. We admitted that in the despatch in which we denounced our old commercial treaty with Germany with our eyes open, knowing from previous experience exactly what denunciation meant. In all the Continental commercial treaties there were two columns of the tariff—one showing more-favoured treatment and the other less. They put in the first column the nations which treated them well, and in the other column the nations which treated them ill. But that was not an invariable rule. We had been put in the less-favoured column by Spain, although we did not give a preference to other nations, simply because Spain was trying to use it as a screw to induce us to change our wine duties. But Spain found that it did not pay, and she withdrew from that position without any action on our part. We denounced the commercial treaty with Germany in 1897 on behalf of Canada and, after negotiations in 1898, Germany did what France did on another occasion—she gave us the most-favoured-nation treatment by law, but she omitted Canada, of course, from that most-favoured-nation treatment. He said "of course" because that was the usual course which we should have expected from the language we had used as to Canada being a fiscal entity. In 1899 the Government grumbled against that action, but accepted the situation, and in 1900 we expressed our satisfaction at having obtained the most-favoured-nation treatment for the Empire as a whole, less Canada.

They did grumble in 1900, but about quite another matter. They said they were sorry about the way that Germany was treating Barbados. Barbados was a very curious case. It promised preferential treatment to the United States, but it had not come off. Germany put Barbados in the second column because Germany said that Barbados had promised preferential treatment to the United States. Lord Salisbury, in a despatch, pointed out that the preference to the United States, to be granted by Barbados, depended on action by the United States which might not be taken. Now, from 1899 to 1903, nothing was said about Canada at all, and therefore he thought he was justified in saying that, after all these attempts to secure a military alliance with Germany, after all the cringing to Germany, after all that took place with regard to Venezuela, the Baghdad Railway, the Anglo-German agreement, and to China, the Government, when the howling in the country had been excited by these proceedings, suddenly discovered a tremendous grievance against Germany in regard to Canada which they had allowed to slumber for four years. We stirred up this matter. Lord Lansdowne on 2nd April, 1903, wrote—

> "It would be an advantage if you could ascertain whether Germany intends to continue to deny the same treatment to Canada."

That would have been nothing in itself, but it was the first stirring up of the question after Germany had become unpopular in this country. Then came a long despatch from Lord Lansdowne on 20th June, in which the Germans were told that—

> "After having patiently waited for five years in the hope of coming to an arrangement with Germany, the Canadian Government decided that they could no longer allow the matter to sleep."

And that, therefore, they were going to put on a special surtax on German goods in addition to the preference to ourselves. He would ask the House for a moment to turn to one or two other passages in this Blue-book, which showed to some extent the surprise with which the German Government received this communication on our part. Our Ambassador in his despatch, quoted on page 29 of the Blue-book, said—

> "Germany in her own colonies knows no difference between German and foreign goods."

We had told Germany ourselves, what was the obvious fact, that we had no control over the Canadian tariff and that Canada was a separate fiscal entity, as plainly as we could tell them anything, and the fact had never been previously denied. When they had a great and growing dominion such as Canada, which would become one of the greatest exporting countries in the world, they could not expect a great Power not to act on the powers which their law had given them to meet changes made by a separate fiscal unit of this kind. The German despatch at page 43 concluded—

> "In our opinion the English view of what has passed is based in many respects upon incorrect assumptions; and the responsibility for the initiation and aggravation of the conflict cannot be properly laid on Germany."

He thought the very fact, as came out at Question time the day before, that Canada picked and chose within the Empire, and herself gave a trade preference to some of our colonies and refused it to others, emphasised his argument.

He was by no means friendly disposed towards German policy. He thought we had great grievances against Germany, most of them produced by our Government; nevertheless the Government did in a somewhat unworthy way take advantage of the cry against Germany which their own action had brought into existence. It was said, and it was given as a main ground for action by the Government, that this was a very serious matter for Canada; but Canada said the exact opposite. At the Colonial Conference, Canada said that she knew the result would be unimportant; and the Colonial Conference itself resolved that the matter "was not serious," and that "the remedy was in their own hands." How after that we could seriously complain of the action of Germany he confessed he could not see. His argument was that our interest was peace towards all, and it was contrary to the interest of this country, either on the one hand to set up this doctrine of a military alliance with Germany, against Russia, and on the other hand, to make rather unworthy appeals to public opinion which, upon this point, had been deceived by the Government itself, by making inflamed appeals to the country and by asking if we "were going to take it lying down." He had taken this case as typical of what seemed to him to be the shiftiness of the policy of the Government and of their inability to put before the country a well-thought-out policy which would be consistent with the interests and dignity of the nation.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item A (Salaries, Wages, and Allowances) be reduced by £100, in respect of the Salary of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs."—(*Sir Charles Dilke.*)

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) said that the position of foreign affairs as they affected this country was very important. He confessed that as to definite matters of policy he agreed almost wholly with what had been said by the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean, whose acquaintance with these matters was well known to the House. The right hon. Baronet had given what he called a typical example of the shiftiness of the policy of the Government. He would give others, though, as became a supporter of the Government, his language might not be as strong as that of the right hon. Baronet. The right hon. Baronet had truly pointed out that the people and the Press of this country had saved the Government from the worst consequences of the two stupendous blunders in Venezuela and the Baghdad Railway. That justified the Committee in assisting in discussing foreign affairs at least once a year. It was not easy always to discuss foreign affairs in this House—even the few specific matters to which he himself intended to refer. The Committee were at a great disadvantage, because the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs was in the other House, and because questions had to be addressed to a conscientious, but still subordinate, official, who could not be expected to be acquainted with all the secrets of the Cabinet. The First Lord of the Treasury stated that the Foreign Secretary would never again sit in this House; and in part fulfilment of his prophecy the right hon. Gentleman scarcely ever sat in it himself. He could not but see on the part of some members of the Government a settled purpose to deprive this

House of its power of dealing with great questions; and to transfer that power to another quarter—although the questions agitated the people of this country and concerned its future. That was a matter to which the House of Commons would have to direct its attention. The Prime Minister shielded himself behind the new rules and personal absence; and the Committee could really get very little information on important subjects which were of interest to the House and the country. As he had said, it seemed the settled purpose of some members of the Government to transfer from this House to the other House, to the Cabinet, and to the Closet, the consideration of important questions. He did not, however, think that that would last beyond the next General Election; but, meanwhile, they were confronted with it, and they had to do the best they could, under the discouraging circumstances of an empty Treasury Bench, to discuss the important affairs of the people of this country in connection with foreign countries. He had really no complaint whatever to make of the noble Lord. He did the best he could under very difficult circumstances. The noble Lord was extremely frank; and he often admired the difficulty he felt in giving a Foreign Office answer when the facts were recalcitrant and refused to agree with the Answer. He was the more moved to sympathy, because the noble Lord had recently expressed his profound melancholy at the present situation of His Majesty's Government. He himself partook of that melancholy; and his was as pronounced as that of the noble Lord. He hoped, however, that the noble Lord would be able, in the course of the debate, to give an Answer to certain Questions which he proposed to address to him, and which might, to some degree, dissipate that melancholy.

He had to call the attention of the Committee to a very serious new departure in constitutional practice which might have a serious effect on the foreign policy of the country. He read in that admirable work "The Law and Customs of the Constitution," written by one who was Sir William Anson, but who was now an Under Secretary—

> "It is the modern practice uniformly observed by George III., and only for a short time broken by George IV., that the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs should be present at every interview between the Sovereign and a foreign minister, and so far is the Crown from taking independent action in foreign affairs that all letters addressed to the Queen and the late Prince Consort by foreign princes, or received from them, were shown to the Foreign Secretary or Prime Minister, and the same rule applies in domestic affairs."

The Committee would also remember the eloquent protest of Lord Chatham against the departure from this country of George II., when he said that a Sovereign going abroad should be attended by an English Minister, and that the contrary practice was one which Englishmen should "resist even with their bodies." Let it not be supposed for a moment that he desired to curtail the power of the Crown. On the contrary, he thought it should be constitutionally increased; he had always been the strongest advocate of the Sovereign taking his position, not merely as head of the Privy Council, but also as head of the Cabinet Council, and presiding at the latter as former Sovereigns had done. Let it not be supposed that he was in any way jealous of the power of the Crown; but Ministers were ill-advised when they advised the Sovereign to go abroad and interview foreign Sovereigns and foreign Ministers without providing that His Majesty should be accompanied, as was always the tradition and was the rule, by a Minister of the Crown, to give his colleagues information, to give the Sovereign the advice he might need, and, above all, to keep a record of the matters transacted. The recent disregard of that rule was, he thought, a new and a very serious departure. If, indeed, he were told that these Royal visits were purely private, and that matters of State were not discussed, then he would be content. But he wished to ask if matters of State were discussed by His Majesty the King in the various interviews which he had with the King of Portugal, the King of Italy, and the President of the French Republic, and their Ministers. If so, were any records of such discussions kept, and, above all, were any engagements made of which there were records. The Committee would feel that this was a most important, although a somewhat delicate, question, and that it behoved the Committee to consider an entirely new departure which appeared to have been made in the conduct of foreign affairs.

The right hon. Baronet truly said that there was a permanent understanding between Germany and Russia. It was so, it was always so; and must always be so. It was dictated by the geographical position of the two countries. There was always a tendency on the part of the North to work down on and to overwhelm the southern countries of Europe in common action. It was so from the days of Rome down to the present. The Vandals who sacked Rome were succeeded in the same latitudes by other Vandals who would sack other Romes. It seemed to him, however, that the restless greed of statesmanship for which diplomats were said to lie abroad, was now being diverted to further portions of the earth; and that for the moment Europe was comparatively tranquil. There was, no doubt, some disquiet in the Balkans; but his belief was that it was not serious. Serious questions had, however, arisen with regard to the Dardanelles, in which our Government apparently played a rather discreditable, poor and miserable part. But he would not dwell on that. For the moment he believed a period of quiet had arrived for Europe, which he trusted would be of long duration. The permanently threatened countries of Europe—Turkey, Spain, and especially Holland—might, he hoped, for the present possess their souls in peace. Russia was quiescent. France, Austria and Italy were all engaged in their own affairs. The only country that was aggressive, and always agressive, was Germany. Germany now held, and always had held, the character of seeking to obtain the land of other nations, sometimes by conquest, sometimes by alliance, sometimes by other and less defensible means. It seemed to him that this country was the victim of this policy which had always animated Germany from the time when she was covered with forests, and animated her now when she was covered—well, with professors. The great settlement of Europe arrived at in 1815 was broken up by the aggressive action of Germany. There was the attack on Denmark in 1864, followed by the attack on Austria, and later the ransom of France in 1870. The German policy was expressed in the words:—"*Demander, prendre, et recevoir.*" All the latter-day troubles of the world might be said to have arisen in Germany. Germany seized Kiao-Chau without a shred of excuse. That led to the seizure of Port Arthur by Russia; to the seizure of Wei-hai-Wei by England; and to all the subsequent trouble in China. It seemed to him that a country with such a character and such traditions required the most vigilant and suspicious attention on the part of a country like England, which was so greatly dependent in all its concerns on the maintenance of peace. Yet the policy of successive British Ministers had been marked by a strange subserviency to Germany—entirely contrary to the desires of the country. All who read the biography of the greatest Foreign Minister of modern times—Lord Palmerston—were aware that he owed his position to the conviction that he would resist Germany. He was discharged with ignominy from his office by his Sovereign; but because he was known to be anti-German the English people stood by him from the beginning of his career to the end of his life. Yet the modern Foreign Secretary learned nothing from that. He made himself subservient to Germany—always the concealed foe of England, of the interests of peace, and of the solidity of European settlement.

The noble Lord admitted, as far as an Under Secretary to the Foreign Office could admit, that there was a secret treaty between this country and Germany. In October, 1902, he asked the Under Secretary whether such a treaty existed; and the noble Lord replied that if it did he was precluded from communicating its terms. That was, he thought, an absolute admission as to the existence of the treaty. He did not know whether it existed now; but he presumed it did. He wished to ask the noble Lord now whether there was such a treaty. If the noble Lord could also inform him whether it related to a partition between Germany and England of the territory of our ancient ally, Portugal, it would greatly add to the interest of his answer. The Venezuelan affair was one of the two instances this year in which, as on many occasions before, this country had been made the catspaw of Germany, apparently with the complacent self-admiration of the statesmen who composed the Cabinet. It was a matter prepared entirely in secret. It was a conspiracy from beginning to end between the Foreign Secretary and his colleagues and the German Government for the aggrandisement of Germany. A hostile act had been committed before this country knew anything about it. Then there was a debate on a Motion for the Adjournment of the House, a debate which was utterly inadequate under the New Rules. The Fleet was sent to Venezuela to collect a sum not mentioned. The only claim named was the German claim. The whole thing was a secret arrangement between, as he believed, His Majesty's Government and the German Emperor. It was undoubtedly one of the results of the visit of the Kaiser to this country. The Prime Minister, at the Mansion House on November 10, 1902, had characterised that suggestion as "the wildest and most fantastic invention." But what was wild and fantastic about the whole Venezuela business was this common adventure of England and Germany into the American Continent at the risk of this country losing the friendship of the people of the United States. If they had not actually seen it in operation, sane men would find it difficult to believe that any British Minister would face the risk of such an undertaking. The noble Lord the Under-Secretary, who could always find a word in season, had truly described the Venezuela affair as "a mess." Of course it was a mess, and he doubted whether it was yet arranged. A protocol was signed which professed to bring the whole thing to an end on 13th February, 1903, but he should like to hear from the noble Lord whether there were not questions still left over for settlement. But if this country were really out of the Venezuelan wood, he hoped the Government would take the whole adventure to heart as a warning not to enter into filibustering alliances with such a Power as Germany, or, at any rate, not to do it until they had first consulted Parliament.

The Baghdad railway was another adventure which arose out of the visit of the Kaiser to England. Apparently it was the inspiration of the Colonial Secretary. In November, 1899, the Kaiser came to this country. On the 30th of the month the Colonial Secretary, speaking at Leicester, declared that England ought not to remain isolated on the Continent, and that it must be apparent to every one that a natural alliance was one between this country and Germany. Circumstances have changed since 1899, but on that change he would not dwell. On December 3, 1899, the *Cologne Gazette* stated that the new attitude of England towards Germany, as shown in the speech of the Colonial Secretary, would enable Germany to carry out the Baghdad railway, and on December 23 the contract was signed by which the Anatolian Company got possession of the railway. The question had slumbered from 1900 to 1903. That business again was carried on in secrecy, and that was his complaint. If His Majesty's Government would only act on the advice of the Colonial Secretary and give up this secret diplomacy, which always failed, and accept the principle of open diplomacy, many of these blunders and many of these debates would be saved. There was one remarkable thing. On March 16 the Government had in their possession Consul Waugh's Report that the proposed railway was a German scheme, promoted in the interest of Germany against all others; yet on April 7, and on the Motion for the Adjournment, which, as the right hon. Baronet had truly said, was one of the last of our liberties which were left to the House, when he raised the question in the House, the First Lord of the Treasury declared that the railway had nothing German about it. When he protested, the Prime Minister stated he was perfectly correct, and yet, at that time, the Government had in their pockets—and had had since the 16th March—the Report of Consul Waugh, enclosing the copy of the contract, which showed that the whole thing was a German concern. He did not object to the railway, because all railways were good feeders of ships. But this was not a railway; it was a financial fraud and a political conspiracy—a fraud whereby English trade would suffer, and a conspiracy whereby the political interests of England would be threatened. It amounted to a military and commercial occupation by Germany of the whole of Asia Minor. It was due to the English people and the English Press that this almost completed conspiracy with Germany was stopped. In the course of a fortnight the Government, on 23rd April, declared that what they first said was not a German railway was a German railway, and that they would have nothing to do with it. He was delighted to hear that statement, but he did not think the danger was quite passed; for the Prime Minister on the 8th of April said that whether they made it an English railway or not, the railway would be made, and the noble Lord said if circumstances arose which might cause a modification in the views of the Government, the Government would consider what position they should take up. That was not sufficient for him. He asked the noble Lord, as the representative of the Government, to say that the Government adhered, and intended to adhere, to their decision of the 23rd of April with regard to the railway. If the noble Lord would give a categorical answer to that question he would be very much relieved.

The next point to which he desired to refer was the treatment of Canada by Germany. The Government seemed always to be in concert with Germany when Germany was in the wrong, and always opposed to her when she was in the right. Certainly it was impossible to conceive a stronger and more unassailable position than that of Germany in this instance. The foundation of our colonial system was the "complete tariff autonomy" of the self-governing colonies. So far as this country was concerned, self-governing colonies were, as regards their tariffs, in exactly the position of foreign nations. They were entirely separate from us. The Under-Secretary shook his head. Did the noble Lord know any country of which a part imposed 24 per cent. import duties on goods from the other part? If the colonies and the mother country were one for tariff and fiscal purposes, how on earth was it that they were so separate that Canada imposed 24 per cent duties on the imports from this country, and Australia also put on duties, though not quite so high as Canada? If they were one, how did the noble Lord explain the fact that not one of the colonies was so similarly situated with us, much less one with us, that it would accept the blessed invention of dear sugar which was enshrined in that great triumph of modern diplomacy—the Sugar Convention? It was perfectly clear that the separation for fiscal and tariff purposes between the self-governing colonies and this country was absolute and complete. They were independent of us; we were independent of them. They took one way—that of protection—which we had not yet taken; we took another way—that of free trade. The colonies and this country acted on different policies, which reposed on different principles. Could anything be more separate? The noble Lord, however, still held to the theory that the colonies and this country were one—a theory which was never advanced until its invention for the purpose of picking a quarrel with Germany. He would not dwell further on the matter. He had made his point out of the mouth of his Majesty's Ministers, who had themselves, through the noble Lord's own father, asserted the principle of the complete tariff autonomy of the self-governing colonies. When, therefore, Canada withdrew the most-favoured-nation treatment from Germany, Germany had an undoubted right to withdraw it from Canada. Now it had long been recognised, and he believed it to be still true, that the favoured-nation clause, which we now have with some twenty-five or thirty nations, was the most important foundation of British trade, and that which secured us in the foreign markets of the world.

What had we done with regard to Russia over this favoured-nation clause, in connection with which we now had so great a quarrel with Germany? Russia claimed the benefit of the clause as a protection against the imposition by this country of countervailing duties upon her sugar, and she claimed it upon the most absolute foundation. Our own law officers in the year

1880 gave it as their distinct and settled opinion that to impose countervailing duties of any sort on the produce of any one foreign country and not equally on all, was a violation of the favoured-nation clause. It was said that the present law officers differed from that opinion, but when the Prime Minister was challenged as to whether it was all three law officers or only the Lord Chancellor who differed he would give no answer. If it had been all three law officers the right hon. Gentleman would have had no difficulty in answering. It was very strange that one set of perfectly impeccable law officers should arrive at one conclusion on certain facts, while another set, equally impeccable, arrived at another conclusion on exactly the same facts. It was impossible for any candid person reading the correspondence with Russia in reference to this favoured-nation clause to deny that, as in the case of Germany, we had acted most shabbily and meanly. The whole of the correspondence was discreditable to this country, and seemed to have been conducted in the spirit not of a statesman, but of a pettifogging attorney defending the case of a cheating tradesman. He hoped the noble Lord would be able to answer the Questions he had put—viz., were any negotiations with foreign potentates or statesmen conducted by His Majesty during his visit abroad; did they result in any engagements binding upon this country; what records, if any, had been kept of them; were there any questions under the Protocol of February 11th with Venezuela still unsettled; would the Government undertake not to depart without previously informing Parliament from the decision at which they had already arrived with regard to the Baghdad Railway; and what were the terms of the secret treaty with Germany.

* LORD CRANBORNE: I think that the Committee will agree that the speeches to which we have just listened have covered so much ground and dealt with so many subjects of interest in all parts of the world that unless I venture to trouble the Committee with a few remarks now I shall be so overweighted with detail as to be almost over whelmed. I have no complaint to make of the speech of my hon. friend the Member for King's Lynn with regard to myself. He has been good enough to compliment me on certain points, but he mingled with those compliments a certain amount of criticism, the most important of which was that as I did not know all the diplomatic proceedings which have been going on, I was not able to communicate them to the House. It is not for me in this place to say how much I know or how much I do not know, but the reason I have not communicated information to the House is that it would be contrary to the interests of this country to do so. I am afraid that at any rate with regard to one of the Questions of the hon. Member that must be the Answer now. I am not going to discuss on the floor of the House whether or not there is a secret agreement between England and Germany in respect of Portugal, but I will say that there is nothing which His Majesty's Government have done which is in any way aggressive to our oldest ally, Portugal, and I am absolutely confident that if the Question were put to the Portuguese Government they would say the same thing. They know that our intentions in regard to them are entirely in their favour.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: May I assume that this treaty has been communicated to Portugal?

* LORD CRANBORNE: I did not rise to be cross-examined by my hon. friend. He must be satisfied with what I have told him. The right hon. Baronet has indulged in a great deal of very fabulous history, and he has been fond of allocating dates and drawing conclusions, most of which are entirely unfounded. It seems impossible, from listening to the right hon. Baronet, that any Minister, of whatever Party, speaking in this place, can say a civil word of any foreign country but that the conclusion must be at once drawn that we have an alliance with them.

* SIR CHARLES DILKE: I alluded specifically to speeches, one of which was afterwards quoted by the hon. Member for King's Lynn, in which the policy of a military alliance with Germany was advocated by leading Members of the Cabinet.

* LORD CRANBORNE: I am exceedingly doubtful whether, with the exception of Portugal, any European

alliance whatever would be to our advantage. But the statement does not exclude friendly co-operation with our European neighbours. On the contrary, it is, and it always has been, the policy of His Majesty's Government to be on good terms and to co-operate as far as possible with foreign Governments. But I was astonished that the hon. Member for King's Lynn thought it right to criticise His Majesty's visit a few months ago to various Powers in Europe. I thought it was universally admitted by all parties that the visit of courtesy had done nothing but good, in drawing still closer together those friendly feelings which exist between ourselves and the various countries which he visited. The hon. Member made it a matter of complaint that His Majesty was not accompanied by one of his Ministers. I am afraid that if the Minister in whose Department it lies to accompany him—that is to say the Foreign Minister—had done so, it would have thrown out of gear all the other matters of great importance in foreign policy which depend upon Lord Lansdowne's own attention every day and every hour throughout the year. My hon. friend talked in a rather portentous way about precedents. He seems to forget that we have made certain changes since the time to which he referred, and that there is now such a thing as the electric telegraph by which His Majesty, or indeed anybody in a responsible position, can be in close communication with the Home Government at all times. That visit did minister to the good feeling between this country and foreign countries, and I think many Members of the House were witnesses last night of the fruits which His Majesty's visit has produced. But that leads me to remark that no one who was present at that dinner last night could have listened very closely to the proceedings without becoming aware that what was contended for was, not merely, or only, a good understanding between England and France, very valuable though that is, but that, so far as possible, there should be co-operation between the various European Powers, and that the reign of force should gradually be superseded by the reign of law. I do not think my hon. friend the Member for King's Lynn was there, and I am afraid the proceedings would not have harmonised altogether with his own point of view.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: I beg pardon.

*LORD CRANBORNE: No one who desires us to be on friendly terms with the other European Powers would have used the language, which I must describe as language of great discourtesy towards Germany, which my hon. friend has just been guilty of.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: Were there any Germans there last night?

*LORD CRANBORNE: My hon. friend knows perfectly well that that has nothing to do with it. I suspect that he has been one of the first in the last few months to lecture and criticise Germans for observations of an uncivil and discourteous character which they have made with regard to his own country, and I feel bound to enter this protest. Nothing but harm arises from the use of language of the kind my hon. friend has used; and, if I may say so, it deprives my hon. friend of any claim to be a good authority on foreign politics if he cannot restrain himself from using language of that kind.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: "What I have said, I have said."

*LORD CRANBORNE: I am bound to say the right hon. Baronet used no such language. His criticism was really delivered against His Majesty's Government, and not against a foreign Government; and he seemed to think that the Foreign Office was very ignorant and headless; that they had no appreciation of the difficulties of the situation, and that a number of points which he put forward had evidently not been appreciated by the Foreign Office. I can assure him that is not the case. Of course, we have paid very close attention to all the difficulties that have arisen from time to time between this country and Germany, and we knew perfectly well that we should be called upon to deal with them at a future time. But merely because we have not announced them in the House of Commons, which would have done nothing but harm, the right hon. Baronet assumes that we do not know them. The right hon. Baronet took us a very long way back and stated that the history of our relations with Germany was one succession of blunders. I do not agree with him. He instanced, for example—going back to very ancient history—the arrangement made with Germany with respect to Zanzibar and Heligoland. I do not think it would be becoming to boast of that arrangement; but I must say, looking at it as a whole, that I do not think we have any reason to complain of the part we played in that bargain. Not only did we secure a protectorate over the very important island of Zanzibar—important both from a strategical and from a commercial point of view—but we certainly added to our Empire a most fertile and profitable part of East Africa, for which payment was made in the shape of the Island of Heligoland, which never could have been of the least use to us. It seems to me to have been a first-rate bargain for this country. I will not follow all the steps which the right hon. Baronet has taken. I am content to deal with relatively modern times, and to say a word or two about our policy in China and the negotiations which we have had with Germany in respect to that country. The right hon. Baronet has dwelt at some length upon the Anglo-German Agreement, and did me the justice to say that I had never set it before the House as a great matter. Indeed, I remember in the first speech that I made in this House, speaking from this place, I then said, though it was a step in the right direction, it was a very small step, and if hon. Gentlemen did not believe me—of course it was not unnatural that they should not give weight to the opinion of a newly-joined Under-Secretary—if they did not believe me it was their own fault. I have never imagined for a moment that the Anglo-German Agreement was a matter of vast importance; but I do not think it was a mistake. I think, so far as it went, it was a very good agreement. It was one more assertion on our part of the policy which we have always desired to pursue in China—namely, the policy of the integrity of China and the policy of the open door. And if it turned out that the German Government did not interpret that instrument in the same way as we regarded it, that did not make the agreement, instead of being an advantage, a disadvantage to us. So far as it went it did good, and nothing but good. The right hon. Baronet seems to think that that agreement represented a policy of spheres of influence as opposed to the policy of the "open door." That shows a very strange forgetfulness on his part of what that instrument contains.

*Sir CHARLES DILKE: I did not say that instrument was a policy of spheres of influence. I said you had put two alternative policies before the House, and this policy gave up the alternative policy of spheres of influence.

*Lord CRANBORNE: It certainly was not intended to be a policy of spheres of influence; it was a policy of the integrity of China, of the open door, and open ports and rivers. That has always been our policy, and we have always pursued it. I hardly like to go in great detail into the question of Chinese railways, to which the right hon. Gentleman devoted a great deal of time. He seemed to think that in that respect we are getting the worst of it in the competition with Germany. That is not the information which has reached the Foreign Office. I have no reason to boast of what has passed. On the contrary, it is a matter of business all through. But the two great syndicates which are developing railways in that part of China, the German syndicate and the British syndicate, seem to me to be on very good terms; and there is no feeling on one side or the other that either party has got the best of the competition. The right hon. Baronet spoke of the evacuation of Shanghai, and seemed to think that there again we had got the worst of it in our competition with Germany. I have already had an opportunity of pointing out to the Committee of the House of Commons that that is by no means the case. Certainly the German Government had put forward certain claims which we could not accept. We refused to accept them, and the Chinese Government took our view and not Germany's view, and said in a most categorical way that nothing which had been stated interfered in the least with the rights of Great Britain. The right hon. Baronet only said one word about Manchuria, and I will not deal with it at any length. There again our policy is perfectly well known. It is contained in the instruments to which we have affixed the signatures of His Majesty's Government, and of course the principal of those instruments is the Anglo-Japanese agreement. I think in that agreement we have recognised the special interests of Japan in Korea, and we are very glad to recognise them. On the other hand, we have asserted once more our own interest in the "open door" throughout the Chinese Empire. That does not mean, of course, that we do not know full well that Russia occupies rather a special position in Manchuria. On the contrary, we recognised that so far back as 1899, when we made a famous railway agreement with Russia, in which there was mutual recognition of the right, so far as we were concerned, of Russia to make railways in Manchuria without our competition, and of ourselves to make railways in the Yang-tsze Valley without Russia's competition. So there is nothing in this policy which is secret, as the hon. Member for King's Lynn seems to think; it is to be found on the face of public instruments to which we have affixed our seal. Then the right hon. Baronet dealt with the question of Venezuela, and put together a number of dates and drew conclusions to his own satisfaction with regard to the visit of the German Emperor. So far as I know, there is no word of truth in the view of the right hon. Gentleman. I was not present at Sandringham; but on the bench there are two of my right hon. friends who were there.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE said he had said nothing about the German Emperor. He had referred to the date of the despatch signed by Lord Lansdowne, who had stated that he saw Count von Bülow on that date.

*LORD CRANBORNE: It does not matter what the date was. The policy with regard to Venezuela had gradually grown up months before the visit of the German Emperor to this country. Nothing is more absurd than for hon. Members, because they do not see all the secrets of the Foreign Office, to think themselves at liberty to support this particular idea which is rooted in the mind of the right hon. Gentleman.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE said he asked why no despatch was laid by the Government except the one despatch of that date showing joint action. He was not speaking of British action, but of joint action.

*LORD CRANBORNE said the despatch was no doubt written on that date, but the treatment of both England and Germany by Venezuela was a matter of many months' growth, long before the visit of the German Emperor. I am authorised to say now that the German Emperor's visit had nothing whatever to do directly or indirectly——

*SIR CHARLES DILKE: I made no remark whatever about the German Emperor. The Prime Minister did not hear my speech.

*LORD CRANBORNE: If I have misrepresented the right hon. Baronet I withdraw. But I understood him, by calling attention to these dates, to convey the innuendo that it was part of the results of the German Emperor's visit that we became associated in Venezuela with Germany. And if he did not say so, the hon. Member for King's Lynn said so in categorical terms, and quoted some obscure German print in order to prove his point. That I absolutely deny.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): Will the noble Lord repeat what he was saying when he was interrupted, perhaps naturaly interrupted, by the right hon. Baronet, who wished to correct him? The noble Lord was conveying a very important fact to the House, and I think we ought to have it in its full terms.

*LORD CRANBORNE: What I am authorised to say is this—that the German Emperor had nothing whatever to do, either direct or indirect, with any communications to His Majesty's Ministers as to the co-operation between Great Britain and Germany in the matter of Venezuela. That is merely an incident; but I protest in the warmest way against the criticism which has been delivered at the head of His Majesty's Government for our co-operation with Germany in Venezuela. Why should we not have co-operated with Germany? Is it really to be taken as an axiom of foreign politics that, because the policy of this country has not been in the past on all fours with the policy of another country, because, perhaps, certain rather discourteous observations have been passed in the German Reichstag, therefore, for all time, we are never to co-operate with Germany? There is, for example, the question of the slave trade. One of our principal assistants in suppressing the slave trade is the German Empire. Are we to be told that because—I frankly admit the fact—Germany did not treat us very well, indeed, treated us rather badly, in reference to our South African war, therefore we are not to co-operate with her in suppressing the slave trade? The thing is absolute nonsense. What we have got to look after is British interests; and all this fussy sentimentality is really beside the point. I yield to no one in resenting the criticisms, the most unfair criticisms, the most false criticisms, that were made against our troops in South Africa by Germany; but His Majesty's Government would have been unfit for their place if they had not done their best to defend British interests in Venezuela, wholly irrespective of those unfortunate words which had been uttered a few months before. The criticism which was directed against us in respect of our Venezuelan policy, that it estranged the United States, has turned out to be absolutely untrue. I say that our relations with the United States were never more friendly than they are at the present moment. There was never greater cordiality and harmony than there is at the present moment. I know that the right hon. Baronet will say that that is because the people did it, and not the Government. But, at any rate, we are part of the people of this country, and we claim, and claim with some confidence, that we represent in these matters the opinion of our fellow-countrymen; and I do not for a moment think so badly of the public opinion of the United States as to believe that it resented our following what was evidently the most convenient course in asserting the rights of our fellow-subjects in Venezuela. The fact of the matter is that the American people are a very sensible people, and they recognise, I believe, as we do, that if both England and Germany have at the same time grievances of a similar character to complain of against a semi-civilised Power like Venezuela the natural course is to enforce reparation together and not separately.

Lord Cranborne.

I am sorry the hon. Member for King's Lynn has not thought it right to remain in his place while I was attempting to deliver something of a reply to his remarks. He was very sensitive about the absence of a certain very illustrious occupant of this Bench while he was speaking; but I really think it is going a long way when an hon. Gentleman delivers a very well-prepared philippic against His Majesty's Government, and immediately after he has finished quits the House I will content myself with saying that the whole account he gave of the Baghdad Railway affair was completely erroneous. The Government never agreed to anything. My right hon. friend indicated that, if certain terms turned out to be terms which could be agreed upon by certain syndicates, the Government would not withhold their support, and would even give certain facilities. But we were not satisfied, in the event, that the terms which we put forward had been agreed to. On the contrary, we found that in several respects the terms which the two syndicates had arrived at did not harmonise with those which my right hon. friend put forward. The idea that His Majesty's Government were prepared to support a German railway in Asia Minor is untrue, simply definitely untrue. The object of the negotiations, so far as they lay in the hands of His Majesty's Government, was not to support a German railway but to turn a German railway into an international railway. That was the object, and if it had been possible to achieve it I believe the policy would have been a perfectly sound one. Are we to be strangers to the development of Asia Minor? Are we, who hold the reater part of the trade, to have othing to say to railway development n Asia Minor if we can get the terms which we require for our co-operation? I do not deny that we were not able to get the terms, and I go further, and say that the outcry which was made in this matter--I think the very ill-informed outcry—made it exceedingly difficult for us to get the terms we required. After all, the getting of capital in this country is a very delicate matter. It is possible sometimes for a Government to harden its heart and to ride through the fence, however severe the prickles they have to encounter in the process may be. But capital is not like that, and if there is an outcry in this country private capital is at once estranged. So the whole process of the negotiations was immediately arrested, and it became impossible for us to secure the terms which we wanted.

I pass from the Baghdad Railway to consider for a moment what the right hon. Baronet said with respect to the Canada Blue-book. I do not agree with the right hon. Baronet's history. He seemed to think that there were very few occasions on which the British Government had made representations to the German Government in respect of their treatment of Canada. The original representation, as the Committee is aware, took the very emphatic form of denouncing our treaty with Germany because the terms of that treaty did not permit of Canada and Great Britain making whatever fiscal conditions they pleased between themselves.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: There is no such prohibition in the treaty.

*Lord CRANBORNE: Yes, the treaty did prevent Canada and this country making whatever fiscal arrangements they pleased between themselves.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: Where?

*Lord CRANBORNE: I am not prepared to argue the question with the hon. Gentleman. Everybody knows that under the most-favoured-nation clause in that treaty it was impossible for Canada to give a preference to this country. The Government of that day announced in the strongest terms that they were not going to allow such a disability to continue, and that, rather than permit a treaty to continue to exist which imposed this disability, they would denounce it, and they did denounce it. Then came the conversation which took place with a representative of the German Foreign Office in September, 1898, in which the British Ambassador pointed out how disappointing was the decision of the German Government to withhold the minimum tariff from Canada. There was another representation in 1899, and then there were the negotiations which the right hon. Baronet entirely forgot to mention—they are not contained in this Blue-book—which took place in Canada itself between representatives of the colony and the German Consul-General. And, lastly, there were the recent representations in 1903, in which we explained how important we thought it that the German Government should treat Canada better. Our position appears to me to be perfectly clear. We desire to be on good terms with every country, Germany included, but we put our colonies before everybody. And even if it could be shown, as my hon. friend tried to show, that up to that moment Canada had been treated in all respects as a separate fiscal unit, all we have got to say is this—that, however long that had continued, it must be put an end to, and put an end to at once. We were not prepared to go on any longer, in the face of the modern development of cordial feeling between all parts of the Empire, with a disability of this kind in respect of fiscal relations. And once that is admitted by Germany, once she and other countries admit that the fiscal relations between England and her colonies are a domestic matter with which they have no concern, then I can assure the Committee that our attitude in negotiating a new treaty with Germany will be as conciliatory as the greatest friend of Germany could desire. I would point out to the Committee how very unfair it is to charge the Foreign Office with neglect of duty, with incompetence, with securing no results, as is the fashion sometimes with hon. Gentlemen opposite. Since I have been in office—that is to say, since I have had the honour of serving under Lord Lansdowne—if I gave the list the Committee would be astonished at the mass of work we have turned out, the number of treaties of the first class that we have concluded, the number of negotiations we have brought to a successful termination, and the success which has attended our efforts to draw closer our friendly relations with Italy, with France, and with the United States. I think I may claim, and claim with some confidence, that if these facts are looked into impartially and fairly, whatever change may in the near future await this Government, one thing will be true, that the Foreign Office administration although it has not, of course, been perfect has, on the whole, been thoroughly successful—yes, I say so, and if the right hon. Baronet challenges me I shall be able to make good my words—worthy of the traditions of that Office, and worthy of the interests of the country for which that Office exists.

MR. BLAKE (Longford, S.) said he wished to make one request to the noble Lord. Several allusions had been made to the negotiations between the Canadian Government and the Consul-General of Germany in Quebec. The existence of these negotiations was first brought to the attention of the House by the First Minister some time ago, and only the other day the Colonial Secretary, in answer to a Question, stated that he was not aware that any record of the negotiations existed, and referred to the circumstance that, except by arrangement, all such negotiations were more properly transacted through the Home Government. He had this to say, on the authority of a Canadian gentleman who spoke with him the other day. That gentleman informed him that these negotiations, at any rate the most important part, were on paper, and that they had been communicated to the Canadian House of Commons some time in the month of April last, and he gave him an account of the statement in those written communications of the attitude of the Canadian Government, communicated to the German Government through its Consul-General, with reference to the most-favoured-nation clauses in all treaties. It appeared to him that this was of the highest interest and importance, and that it ought to be brought to the attention of that House if any question of colonial feeling was brought in. He did not choose to communicate to the House the oral version of a document like that given by his interlocutor, although he had absolute confidence in him. But if it were true that these communications were in writing, and were communicated last spring to the Canadian House of Commons, it was full time that they were laid before that House.

SIR EDWARD GREY (Northumberland, Berwick): I propose to say something on the question of the Papers which have recently been laid about Germany and Canada; but they belong really so much more to a much larger question, than they do to a general question of foreign policy, that I should like to deal with the latter first. Of course I sympathise entirely with the demand of the hon. Member who has just sat down, that if there is more information throwing light on the Canadian point of view it ought to be laid before this House. The noble Lord at the end of his speech made, I think, one of the widest and most comprehensive claims for general success over an enormous sphere of policy that I ever heard made on behalf of a Department in the House. I am sorry that I cannot endorse it; and although he made that large claim, he passed by without an effective answer a very large part of the powerful criticism of the policy of the Government to which we have listened, especially in reference to China and Venezuela. With one thing I sympathise and entirely agree. I welcome, and am prepared to give the Government credit for, their part in encouraging a better understanding between ourselves and our neighbours on the other side of the Channel. I agree entirely with what he said about the beneficent results of His Majesty's journey abroad tending to bring about better relations. I think His Majesty's visit, and the return visit of the President of the French Republic, was an international benefit to both countries. But although I endorse all that, and would say no word to depreciate the part which His Majesty's Government, or the French Government either, have had in bringing about this better state of things, I think it is worth while to remember that if that has been possible now it might have been possible two or three years ago. It is very difficult to explain why it should be so; but I am sure every one who has followed foreign affairs will recognise that it is almost as if in the political atmosphere sometimes there came a sort of benign influence which so affected public opinion in different countries, that it made possible better relations than are possible on ordinary occasions. If so, it was a happy thing that both Governments took advantage of the occasion. I agree with the noble Lord that it is not merely a better understanding, but that it is the fact that that better understanding is based on a more general hope of peace. It has been, even in this House, the fate of hon. Members to be a little chilled by the response which the British Government have given when they have been pressed to enter upon negotiations which would lead to general treaties of arbitration. I think the reason why those representations have not, perhaps, met with so much encouragement on previous occasions is that it is not in the power of one Government alone to promote peace, but that there must be a general feeling abroad in the direction of arbitration. Well, there is such a general feeling abroad, and it is, I think, because the better understanding between ourselves and France has not merely eased the relations between the two countries, but also is making for the peace of the world at large, that we ought to welcome it. I will say this—that really public opinion is the great factor in these matters, and if two peoples really convince each other, through the Press and other channels, that they wish each other well, it is worth more to those two nations than if a treaty of alliance were made.

I pass to a policy which has not been so successful, the policy of the Government in relation to certain affairs in different parts of the world in which they have had the co-operation of Germany. I accept entirely, of course, the noble Lord's statement that the co-operation with regard to Venezuela was not instigated by the German Emperor. I never attached any importance to the question whether it was or was not so instigated; what I have attached importance to was the statement of the noble Lord that it was a mess. Whatever its origin was, it was none the less a mess.

*LORD CRANBORNE: I am afraid I cannot claim any copyright in that phrase; I think it first appeared in the *Daily News.*

SIR EDWARD GREY: I did not understand the noble Lord to quote it.

*LORD CRANBORNE: Yes.

SIR EDWARD GREY: I understood him to adopt it.

*LORD CRANBORNE: I explained at some length that I did not look on it as a mess. Perhaps the right hon. Baronet had not an opportunity of seeing a very full report of my observations.

SIR EDWARD GREY: The phrase I had in my mind was: "Of course it is a mess." But I admit I did not see a very full report, and I accept any construction the noble Lord places upon it. I will try and explain why I think it was a mess. The danger of the Venezuelan co-operation was this, to my mind—we had certain claims against Venezuela which were the result of definite outrages on little vessels belonging to Trinidad, and those were claims which any nation would be bound to press and could not possibly allow to pass without peremptory demand for compensation. But the German claims were not on all fours with our claims; they were much more of a nature to be the subject of long negotiation than of peremptory demands. We tied up our case with the German case, although they did not really correspond in quality. That was one of the mischiefs of the Venezuelan difficulty. Another was this—that we did undoubtedly run the risk of impairing our relations with the United States. It ought to be an object of British policy, in any operations we are forced to undertake on the other side, as far as possible to make an understanding with the United States our first object, and, if possible, an understanding with the United States alone. It is not every nation that regards with favour the good understanding which happily exists between this Government and the United States; and if you allow yourselves to be engaged with third or fourth parties in matters on the other side of the Atlantic you will some day be engaged in a co-operation out of which you will not get as happily as you did out of the Venezuelan affair, and out of which you will not get without finding that your relations with the United States are impaired. As it was, a great risk was run, and I agree with the right hon. Member for the Forest of Dean that it was public opinion which prevented these matters from being worse than they were; it was public opinion which got the Government out of the mess. It was the overwhelming determination shown on the part of public opinion here that the matter must not go further, and that the Government must get out of it as quickly as possible, which prevented an unfavourable development of public opinion in the United States. I will not go into the Baghdad question at length, as there are other questions to be raised. I am delighted that there the Government, if they did get into a mess at all, did not get very far into it. But I think it was greatly owing to public opinion again, to a most remarkable explosion of public opinion, very forcibly voiced by the hon. Member for King's Lynn in this House, which prevented the Government from going farther than they did. Then we come to China, and there again I do not see the success of the foreign policy which the noble Lord has claimed. The co-operation with Germany in China, as far as I can judge, has been an entire failure. The noble Lord defended what he now calls the Yang-tsze agreement with Germany.

*LORD CRANBORNE: I was only following the phrase of the right hon. Member for the Forest of Dean.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE: I repudiated it at once when it was applied.

*LORD CRANBORNE: I repudiate it now.

SIR EDWARD GREY: There is no intention so to call it here then, but it is in reference to its being called so in Berlin that I would refer. That agreement was one that sounds very well, and the noble Lord said it was good, as far as it goes. But does it go anywhere? The agreement was understood, when it first appeared, as doing something which was tending to the co-operation of ourselves and Germany in two objects, the maintenance of the integrity of China and the maintenance of the open door. There has been great anxiety and apprehension about both these things in regard to Manchuria, as to whether the agreement between His Majesty's Government and Germany was of any use in the matter. I should like the noble Lord when he speaks again to tell us whether the Government have appealed to this agreement with Germany and asked for co-operation in maintaining the open door in Manchuria.

*LORD CRANBORNE: I can answer that Question at once, and I think I have already answered it. The German Government take the view that the Anglo-German Agreement does not, so far as they are concerned, apply to Manchuria.

SIR EDWARD GREY: Then I think that the Anglo-German Agreement is a most one-sided instrument. One of its conditions is that we are to keep for Germany the open door in the Yang-tsze region, which we never had any intention of closing, and it seems that it is not of the least use to hope for help from Germany in maintaining the open door in any other part of China. At the first test the agreement has broken down. The question has arisen in Manchuria, and the agreement has proved of no use. I hope we shall have no more of these one-sided agreements. After all that has passed in China I think the Government has been pursuing a wrong policy altogether with regard to co-operation with Germany. They have been relying on the one Power from whom they have got nothing in return. If that had led to good feeling between us and Germany I would not have looked too closely into the bargain; but what do I feel about this close co-operation with Germany in China and Asia is that your German policy is one of two alternatives. The alternative I should like to see pursued would be a policy of co-operation and agreement with Russia. But I am sure that, so long as the key of your policy is co-operation or agreement with Germany in the first instance, you will never have a chance of co-operation and agreement with Russia. Our interests in Asia are interests which touch more closely and more often with Russia than with any other country. The noble Lord has said that Russia occupies a special position in Manchuria. It is a special position, so special that we ought really to have had some statement from the noble Lord as to what the view of His Majesty's Government is with regard to it. My view is that we ought to distinguish very clearly and distinctly between territorial and political questions in Manchuria and commercial questions—that the policy of His Majesty's Government should be limited to commercial questions, that we should not occupy ourselves with political questions, and that the Government should work for co-operation with other Powers in maintaining the open door in Manchuria. But, considering the railway interests of Russia in Manchuria, they ought not to mix themselves up with questions about territory or political questions in Manchuria—that is to say, the object of British diplomacy should be limited to securing the open door for British trade and to avoid getting into political controversies. The United States apparently take the same view, and I hope the Government will not be left alone if they adopt that policy.

The question whether it is possible to have agreement and co-operation with Russia in Asia is one which it is impossible for anybody but the Government to answer. But I have never seen that His Majesty's Government have made any real effort to get an understanding with Russia and to overcome the obstacles which tradition and past policy have naturally placed in the way of such an understanding. I think it is difficult because I am not sure that Russia pursues a settled policy. I think Russia lives much more from hand to mouth than we think. I think she moves like a large glacier, much more by pressure from behind than from any settled policy; but I am quite sure it should be our object to make up our own minds as to what the limits of our interests in Asia are, and to lose no opportunity of using every possible effort to come to a clear understanding with Russia as to what the boundaries of our interests are. We cannot go on as we have been going on. The Government talk about the *status quo* and integrity, but Russia goes on continually absorbing more and more territory. We hear a great deal of the *status quo* and integrity with regard to China and with regard to Persia, and Russia is continually absorbing more territory and collecting more influence with the central authority. We have to make it our policy to consolidate what we have got in Asia, and to consider what our proper functions are, bearing in mind that if you seek to extend your frontier you must extend it in such a way as not to weaken its defence. You must not advance because another Power is advancing and then find yourselves in occupation of a frontier more difficult to defend than that you had before. That is why I lay stress on consolidation. Having made up your minds what is necessary for consolidation, the sooner the Russian Government is made to understand it the better. Now I have dwelt on this because I do regard the situation in China as serious. I take this from the Shanghai correspondent of *The Times*:—

> "To any observer who observes the position in the far East in its relation to what we call the civilised world, it is evident that the future maintenance of the integrity of China is, humanly speaking, impossible."

I offer no comment on that statement, but it is about the gravest statement that could be made. The Government must have some clear idea of their policy in view of such a situation. The first point should be not to take territory, because we have as much as we can manage. The second point should be to consolidate our frontiers and to defend what we have got without extending those frontiers. The third point is that the open door should be maintained. That can only be done by co-operation with other Powers. And there ought to be in the minds, not only of His Majesty's Government, but of the Governments of other Powers, some clear agreement as to what would happen to their interests in Asia if these large countries, such as China and Persia, have their integrity impaired.

Now I would pass from that to the question of the Papers laid before the House with reference to the correspondence with Germany respecting the Canadian tariff. I asked a Question on this subject some little time ago, and I was given an answer by the Colonial Secretary. We accepted that answer as given, waiting with interest to see how it is to be interpreted by results. The Colonial Secretary, in giving me that answer, reproached me with my ingenuous ignorance on the subject of the relations between Canada and Germany. I have learnt a good deal since then, partly owing to His Majesty's Government, partly owing to the Press; and I would say at once that the information I have since gained makes me of opinion that it is all the more natural that I should have asked the Question some time ago. We have now got these Papers laid as to what has passed between His Majesty's Government and the German Government in relation to the treatment of Canada. I asked a Question as to whether His Majesty's Government regarded that treatment as an act of hostile discrimination. That was my ingenuous ignorance. Now I find that His Majesty's Government, so far from regarding it as an act of hostile discrimination, having asked the German Government for an explanation four years ago, lay down under that explanation without making any reply for about four years. They got their explanation in August, 1899. They made no reply to it, and the German Government were entitled to hold that the explanation was accepted. A few months afterwards the Colonial Secretary appealed for an alliance with Germany, and that, so far as we know, without a word as to her explanation of the treatment of Canada. That I had not realised before. That is a new fact in the situation. It certainly strikes me with some surprise. Another thing I have learnt is that last year, at the Colonial Conference, and this I might have known the other day, but did not, a discussion of this question of the most-favoured-nation treatment of the colonies took place, and an agreement was come to, apparently unanimously, that the matter was not of importance and need not be taken into account. That was a year ago. Now I further learn from the Papers presented that the German Government had a better case for their action than I thought they had. It appears they have been in the habit of making express treaty stipulations with regard to what are to be the relations between the mother country and the colonies, and that, in the case of France, the arrangement was that France was to be free to make any arrangement she liked with her colonies. That is recognised as part of the treaty If you have special recognition of these facts in treaties, it at least leads to the supposition that they are open questions unless expressly mentioned. We had a treaty with Germany which expressly excluded the right of making any such arrangements. That treaty was discontinued. We gave notice that that treaty was to be discontinued, and I think the German Government were at least within their rights in demanding that this matter should be reserved as the subject of negotiation in a future treaty.

There are some points in the correspondence of the Foreign Office in this matter with which I have no fault to find. The last despatch of Lord Lansdowne ends by saying—

> "I have thought it desirable to make these observations in reply to those contained in Baron von Richthofen's note. It seems to me, however, that if the question is to be further discussed, it would be to the advantage of both sides that it should, as suggested by Baron von Richthofen, take the form of an exchange of ideas in regard to the means of obviating the present difference, and His Majesty's Government would certainly be ready to approach such a discussion in a considerate spirit."

I cordially reciprocate that. It is a matter for discussion and negotiation. I go further and say I sympathise with the object of His Majesty's Government that there should be freedom between themselves and the self-governing colonies to make their own arrrangements. All that is a proper subject for negotiation. But in view of the fact that it was stated to be of no importance, it is not justified by the speech we have heard to-day. The Government treated this question as a question of no importance for about four years. They then came to the decision last year with the colonies themselves that the thing really did not matter, and the colonies had their own remedy in their own hands. They have now decided that it is a question on which they have to negotiate with foreign Powers. I have no objection to the negotiations, but they are not now entitled, after all that has passed, after their own admission, after their own delay, to take up the line of indignation and surprise which we have heard of on other occasions. There is, further, in these Papers regarding the correspondence with the Government of Germany a significant passage which has not been referred to in the debate. Baron Richthofen said it might be difficult to induce the Reichstag in Germany to continue the most-favoured-nation treatment, not to any British colony, but to the United Kingdom itself. My contention was that that was very little else than loose talk.

*LORD CRANBORNE: In a formal note?

SIR EDWARD GREY: But he also commented on it afterwards. My impression is that it was loose talk. It was an expression of opinion about the Reichstag, not an exposition of the policy of the German Government—an expression of opinion by Governments as to what may happen in our Parliaments is not the same as a declaration of policy of their own Foreign Office. But, admitting that it was seriously intended to influence His Majesty's Government, I contend that His Majesty's Government in any such case have the remedy in their own hands. It is possible, and I have admitted it before, that there might be some act of hostile discrimination against this country on the part of a foreign Power. But if so, it would be the duty of the Government not to raise great questions of principle and fiscal policy at large, but to come to the House of Commons to make what proposal they thought was required to meet the case. In this instance they have done perfectly right in answering the German contention, by pointing out that there was a complete diplomatic answer to it—namely, that Germany held Canada to be a separate fiscal unit. The fiscal policy of Canada was no reason whatever why the fiscal policy of this country should be affected. There was no evidence that that answer was not accepted by the Government of Germany. I regard hostile discrimination of this kind as exceptional and improper, and if it occurred I think it would be the duty of every party to consider any proposal the Government might put before them for meeting such a policy. At all events, do not let us have any loose talk about retaliation until we have some idea of what we mean by it. There are cases in which retaliation would be the very worst way of meeting such a difficulty. Supposing such a difficulty arose in the United States, would you put a duty on raw cotton? I do not think commercial retaliation is necessarily the remedy at all. There are cases where it might be a perfectly safe and effective remedy, but there are other cases where it would be the most difficult and dangerous one we could use, and if I consider that the German Government have no right to indulge in what I believe was loose talk about the most-favoured-nation treatment, I also think that our Government ought not to indulge in loose talk about retaliation. Retaliation, or commercial retaliation, in nine cases out of ten, is like a weapon with a leaden point and a sharp handle, it does not hurt those against whom it is directed, but only hurts those who use it. I think it was absurd to raise a question connected with the fiscal policy of this country until you had some exceptional question before you. The mere fact that a statement of this kind passed in negotiation is no foundation for leading the country to suppose that we are in an imminent crisis which requires further action. I have nothing more to say upon the case. I believe hon. friends behind me have other questions to raise. I will only say again that on the whole question I see nothing not capable of treatment by the ordinary methods of negotiation, no evidence whatever to show that the ordinary methods of negotiation have failed, and no reason why the country should be asked to take this new departure.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN, Birmingham, W.): I only intervene to say a few words with reference to that portion of the speech of the right hon. Gentleman which referred particularly to the question of German discrimination against Canada, because the general attack upon Foreign Office management, made in the course of the previous speeches, has already been replied to by my noble friend in a manner which is satisfactory, at all events, to his own side of the House, whatever view the Opposition may take of it. But the question raised by the right hon. Baronet who has just sat down, does affect, in a special way, the Department I represent. I hope I have not been guilty of any discourtesy in regard to the phrase he quoted.

SIR EDWARD GREY: I referred to a phrase the right hon. Gentleman used, but I do not take it as any discourtesy.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I certainly did not mean it as such, but I did not quite understand from his speech what was the point about which he had a disposition to question my language. Perhaps the best way to reply would be to remind the right hon. Gentleman of what actually took place. As he knows, after the preference was given by Canada to this country, the German Government withdrew their most-favoured - nation treatment to Canada. That withdrawal constituted a discrimination against Canada on the avowed ground that Canada had given a special preference to the mother country. When that took place discussion arose, in the first instance between the Dominion and His Majesty's Government, and the Dominion asked us what steps we were prepared to take in the matter. Thereupon communications were made with Germany, but without any result. We communicated the failure of our representations to the Dominion of Canada, and then the Dominion of Canada took the matter to a certain extent into its own hands. Technically, of course, no negotiations were going on between Canada and Germany, but what might be called an interchange of views between certain persons, who might be said to be representatives of Canada and the Consul-General of Germany. They were not in a proper and technical sense negotiations. We have not received any record of them, and as far as I know of no such record exists. In any case they would have no final authority, because any treaty would be made formally between this country on behalf of Canada and the German Government. But these private communications between certain members of the Canadian Government and the Consul-General of Germany had no further result than our communications with Germany. Up to this time there has not been the slightest inclination on the part of Germany to meet us upon this subject, and that is how the question remains. The Canadian Government explained that they had constantly hoped for what they considered more reasonable treatment from the Government of Germany, and that therefore they hesitated to take the matter into their own hands, and retaliate in any way on German trade.

But when the last Conference was held with the Colonial Premiers, the matter came up again for discussion; it was discussed at the Conference, and at much greater length between the Canadian Minister and myself; there was nothing secret about it in any way. The Canadian Minister stated the reason why they strongly objected to this arrangement. They said it had been the subject of discussion more, perhaps, as a matter of sentiment than as a matter of any particular importance, but that what was felt in Canada was that the mother country was not sufficiently protecting her children. It was agreed by the Canadian Minister that it was not a matter of large practical importance, first, because the trade between Canada and Germany was not large, and in the second place Canada takes more goods from Germany than Germany takes from Canada. Accordingly, Canada has always had it in her own hands to strike a considerable blow if she thought it desirable to do so. The result of this discussion was summarised in an account of the Conference to which the right hon. Gentleman refers. I would like to read a little more fully than he did. He said it was stated that the matter was of no importance. That was not quite the case. It was of great sentimental importance for the reasons I have given, but in one sense it was also of great practical importance. The words of the reporter of the Conference are—

> "As, however, the exports from the colonies to foreign countries are almost exclusively articles of food or raw materials for foreign industries, the possibility of discrimination against them in foreign markets was not regarded as serious, and as the exports from foreign countries to the colonies are mainly manufactured articles, it was recognised that if such discrimination did take place the

colonies had an effective remedy in their own hands."

That is true. The Colonial Ministers have returned to their several Governments, and in the last Budget of the Dominion of Canada the Government of Canada resolved to take the effective remedies which were in their own hands, and they accordingly put on a discriminating duty against German goods to the amount of 33 per cent. That was a very effective remedy. Then what happened? In the meantime, let me say, I had of course pointed out to the Canadian Minister, and the Ministers of the other colonies concerned, that so long as the arrangements were what they had been for a great many years past it was not possible for us to help them otherwise than by negotiation, and that I did not anticipate the negotiations would prove the slightest good until we are able to say, "unless we can get a good settlement we should be prepared to retaliate." That is an absolutely frank and fair statement of the position as it existed at the time of the last Colonial Conference. That was the position at the time Canada resolved to take the remedy at her hand.

What has been the result of that action on the part of Canada? Germany at once announced its intention—I ought not perhaps to say that. It is sufficient for me to say that the newspapers of Germany were at once full of the intention of Germany to indulge in further retaliation. We were warned by the German Government themselves, in a formal note presented to Sir Frank Lascelles, that they thought that it appeared doubtful, especially having regard to the opposition to be expected in the Reichstag, whether the intention of giving most-favoured-nation treatment to Great Britain could be realised if Germany were differentiated against in important parts of the British Empire, and if, in particular, the report was confirmed that German goods would be less favourably treated than British goods, not only in Canada, but also in British South Africa. The Committee will see from this that the question assumed an infinitely greater importance; because we were informed by Germany not merely that she would continue and increase this policy against Canada, but that she was doing it with a special object—namely, that of preventing any other British Colony from following the example of Canada. As we know that there was a clear indication at the Colonial Conference of the willingness of all the self-governing colonies, without exception, to give us a preference in the future, this action on the part of Germany was a threat, directed in the first place against the colonies, that they should be penalised if they carried out that intention; and it was a threat, in the second place, against this country, that if we did not intervene to prevent the colonies from giving us this preference we should be made to suffer by means of retaliatory treatment on the part of Germany. That is the state of things disclosed by the recent correspondence which has been laid on the Table of the House. The right hon. Baronet said something about the indignation and surprise which found expression in this House. I do not know to what he refers, but he will bear in mind that in my speech on the question I expressed no indignation and certainly no surprise. On the contrary, I said it was perfectly natural that as long as Germany believed that our policy would be a policy of—I was going to say passive resistance —a policy of no resistance at all, it was probable that her statesmen, acting as they believed in the interest of her trade, would continue the policy to which, of course, we took the greatest exception. Without expressing any surprise or indignation, we have, I think, made it perfectly clear that in the future—so far, at any rate, as our Government are concerned—we will not permit this discrimination to continue without taking all the steps in our power to bring it to a close; and I rejoice to think that these declarations, clearly made and, as I believe, supported by the vast mass of the people of this country, have already had their effect. We are now invited to negotiations upon the subject, which may very likely lead to more satisfactory results than those previous negotiations which failed completely because we were obliged to avow that we had no weapon in our hands in order to make a bargain.

*Mr. ASQUITH (Fifeshire, E.): I will refer before I sit down to the concluding observations of the right hon. Gentleman's speech, which raised questions of policy, but before doing so I should like to refresh his memory as to the actual facts of the matter with which we are dealing.

I am not going to take up the cudgels on behalf of Germany, or to make any attack upon Canada. Nothing is farther from my desire or sympathies in the matter. But we must get at the historical facts; and when the right hon. Gentleman says it began by Germany making a hostile discrimination against Canada, he really is not stating accurately what took place. What happened was this. Canada proposed to give a preference to the goods of this country. There was at the time a treaty between us and Germany which treated the British Empire as a whole as a fiscal unity. The result was that if Canada carried out her intention there would be a breach of the treaty. It was therefore necessary for the Government of the day to denounce that treaty in order to clothe Canada with the fiscal autonomy which was necessary to enable her to carry out her intention. The result of the denunciation of the treaty was that not only Canada, but the whole British Empire came, or would have come, automatically under the German general tariff, which, of course, is the *maximum* tariff. Thereupon Germany said she had no objection to give the most-favoured-nation treatment to the rest of the Empire; but that as we had claimed for Canada the position of an autonomous fiscal entity, and as Canada refused to give up discrimination against German goods in the Canadian market, she was not entitled to the most-favoured-nation treatment.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: May I ask how does that differ in any respect from what I have said? Practically the result of the action of Germany was to put Canada, and Canada alone, in a position of disfavour because she had differentiated, not against the rest of the world, but in favour of the mother country.

*MR. ASQUITH: Canada having refused to give Germany most-favoured-nation treatment, Germany said they could not give it to Canada. That is the sum and substance of the matter. The point which the right hon. gentleman has left unexplained is the action of the Government in the matter. The question having originated in the way I have described, Canada came under the operation of the German general tariff at the end of July, 1898. For two years from that date, until May or June, 1900, the only thing that was done by His Majesty's Government was the sending of a despatch by Lord Salisbury inquiring whether Germany was not treating the French, Spanish, and Portuguese colonies in a different manner from our colonies. The explanation of Germany was that she was bound by special treaties to give that treatment to those colonies, and Lord Salisbury appears to have acquiesced in the explanation. At any rate, nothing further was done. That is the history of the first two years. Now I come to a very important and significant fact to which the Colonial Secretary has not referred—that is, to the declaration made on behalf of the German Government in May, 1900, by the Prussian Minister of the Interior in proposing to the Reichstag a Bill for the extension of the existing arrangements. The Minister said:—

> "When single British colonies deviate from the present arrangement, and refuse most-favoured-nation treatment, there are only two courses open—either to apply the autonomous tariff to those single British colonies or to a considerable portion of the British Colonial Empire, which differentiate against Germany, or to utilise the power of applying the autonomous tariff against the whole of the British dominions throughout the world."

In other words, this very same threat, as the right hon. Gentleman calls it, which assumed so serious an aspect when put in a contingent and hypothetical form in April, 1903—just before the new fiscal campaign was inaugurated—this very same threat, expressed in very much more categorical language, was passed entirely unnoticed in May, 1900, by His Majesty's Government. They took it lying down. That was in May or June, 1900. But what becomes of the next two years? We have heard of these *pour parlers*—which apparently were not negotiations at Montreal, as to which, after the remarks of my right hon. friend, I hope we shall have placed before us the materials which have apparently been submitted to the Canadian House of Commons, as negotiations of that kind, by whatever diplomatic term they are described, form an important link in this chapter of history. With the exception of those negotiations which the right hon. Gentleman told us were abortive, nothing took place until the Colonial Conference of last year. Then the whole thing was belittled to the utmost possible degree by the Colonial Secretary himself. [MINISTERIAL cries of "No."] I will give chapter and verse. What I mean to say is that the right hon. Gentleman then treated the matter in what I venture to think is its true proportions; but he belittled it as compared with his present attitude towards it. Speaking at the Colonial Conference the right hon. Gentleman, addressing the Premiers, spoke in the most disparaging language of this Canadian preference to this country. I will quote his words—

> "Canada, therefore, has anticipated the general proposal of the Premiers, and the time which has elapsed has been sufficient to enable us to form a judgment of the effect of an arrangement of this kind, and I have to say to you that, while I cannot but gratefully acknowledge the intention of this proposal and its sentimental value as a proof of goodwill and affection, yet that its substantial results have been altogether disappointing to us, and I think they must have been equally disappointing to its promoters."

The right hon Gentleman then went on to point out that the increase of the foreign trade with Canada since the preferential tariff was brought into existence had been greater in proportion than the increase of the British trade with Canada.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: The right hon. Gentleman said he would give chapter and verse. He must remember that that was an argument to induce Canada to give us a greater preference, and that Canada did, through her Minister, agree to give us a greater preference, if we could give her something in return.

*MR. ASQUITH: At any rate, it was the right hon. Gentleman's description of the state of things which then existed, and I think I am justified in saying that whatever the other intentions of the right hon. Gentleman may have been, his main object was to get Canada to contribute more to the support of the British Navy. However, I am not going to quarrel about that, because it is not very material, Obviously in the view of the right hon. Gentleman at that time it was a matter of very little moment at all. The passage already quoted from the Minutes completely bears out that view because it says, dealing with this question of retaliation—

> "The possibility of discrimination against foreign markets was not regarded as serious, and as the exports of foreign countries to the colonies are mainly manufactured articles, it was recognised, if such discrimination did take place, the colonies had an effective remedy in their own hands."

Does the right hon. Gentleman mean to tell us that he suggested that retaliation could or might take the form of action on the part of this country and not on the part of the colonies?

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: No, I meant exactly the reverse.

*MR. ASQUITH: So I should have thought. What was pointed out to Canada was that if the effect of giving a preference to the goods of this country deprives you of most-favoured-nation treatment in Germany, you have a remedy in your own hands — the Canadians did use the remedy and put a surtax upon German goods—and those measures he said would be effective for the purpose. I will now pass on to summarise the history of these transactions. Here we have a state of things brought into existence in July, 1898, to abate which no step is taken by His Majesty's Government for four years, and when at the end of these four years the matter comes to be discussed between the Government and the colonies, the colonies are told: "You have an adequate remedy in your own hands.' What is the additional weapon which the right hon. Gentleman has got? Only the language used by Baron Richthofen on the 23rd of April of the present year at a most opportune moment, something like three weeks before the inauguration of the new fiscal policy. It appears that Baron von Richthofen wrote a note in these terms—

> "The Imperial Government think, however, that they should not conceal the fact that it appears doubtful, especially having regard to the opposition to be expected in the Reichstag, whether this intention can be realised if Germany is differentiated against in important parts of the British Empire, and if, in particular, the report is confirmed that German goods will in the future be less favourably treated than British, not only in Canada, but also in British South Africa."

That note is explained on the following

page in a letter dated the 23rd of April, in which it is stated that Baron Von Richthofen said to Sir Frank Lascelles that—

> "It would be very difficult to obtain the consent of the Reichstag to the prolongation of most-favoured-nation treatment to Great Britain herself."

Whereupon our Ambassador seems to have replied—

> "If any serious damage were done to British trade by the non-prolongation of most-favoured-nation treatment, the outcry in England would be so great that His Majesty's Government would be forced, however unwillingly, to take retaliatory measures."

Here we have the Baron von Richthofen threatening what the Reichstag would not do, and then you have the British Ambassador on the other side threatening the German Government as to the state of public opinion in England. That is the whole foundation of this menace by Germany of retaliation. I quite agree with Lord Lansdowne's criticism, which I think is most just and neatly and accurately expressed as regards this threat; that it ought never to have been used, because it was totally inconsistent with the position the German Government had taken up. They say—"We will attack you, Great Britain, who have nothing whatever to do with the matter, and are free from all responsibility for it." That is a position which is wholly inconsistent with all they have done in previous years. So far I entirely agree with Lord Lansdowne's criticisms. When we are asked to treat this as though it amounted to an actual case which calls for retaliation on our part against Germany, a more flimsy material to base such a suggestion upon has never been heard of. The very same thing had been expressed, only in much stronger language, more than two years ago by a German Minister in the Reichstag, and no notice whatever was taken of it by His Majesty's Government.

I want, in order that we may have no misunderstanding about this, to say one word, not as to the facts but as to the questions of policy which they suggest. I hear a great deal in these days about what is called retaliation, and what does retaliation mean? It is used in current controversies in two entirely different senses, and with two entirely different applications. It may refer to the actual and existing state of things, or it may refer to a hypothetical and possible state of things. The actual state of things is this — that the great majority of the countries of the world, including our own colonies, have surrounded themselves with protective tariffs which they employ impartially as against the whole world, except in so far as they have been relaxed by stipulations in commercial treaties. I suspect that a great many people when they talk of retaliation mean to attack that system, and mean that although we have no special grievance of our own but only share a common exclusion with the rest of the world from the markets of the protected country, yet there is some obligation on our part to take aggressive steps against that country. That is protection pure and simple. It is an attempt to fight protection abroad by protection at home, and there is no man, whether he calls himself a free-trader or not, who has grasped the doctrine of free trade who would ever consent to accept it. There is another sense in which the term retaliation is used, and it is, so far as I know, a purely hypothetical case in which a foreign country does make a hostile discrimination against a particular State. It may do so either by imposing an extra import duty upon the produce of that State, or what comes to the same thing, by refusing to admit the produce of that State under the most-favoured-nation treatment, which it is willing to grant to its rivals. It may take either of these forms. When that is done, if it is done, and I assume it is done without provocation and justification, it is, in my opinion, what in diplomatic language is called "unfriendly action." The notion that you are bound to lie down, as the Colonial Secretary says, and allow yourselves to be kicked simply because the hostile action taken against you attacks not your own territory but your trade is a pure illusion, and a notion not entertained by any human being. It is certainly no part of the doctrine of free trade. You can repel hostile action in virtue of the elementary law of self-preservation and self-defence, but where we differ, and differ profoundly, from those who talk about retaliation is this—it is a question by what method, it is not a question of the right of defence but what is the most effectual and most expedient method of making your defence good. Very often our best plan is to leave things entirely alone. [MINISTERIAL laughter.] Hon. Gentlemen laugh, but I strongly maintain that proposition. I will say that it is very often much better to leave things alone, because a foreign country which imposes this hostile duty will be found in the long run to be doing more harm to its own trade than to that of anybody else. It is restricting the market upon which it depends for the exchange of its goods. I do not commit myself to the proposition that you must never take, in a case of this kind, action of any sort at all. The action you take must be governed by the facts of the particular case when it arises, but no such case has arisen. I will venture to lay down two general rules. The first is, that in matters of this kind it is never wise to rely upon the policy of bluff, just as in the other sphere, that of diplomacy properly so called, a loud and blustering attitude is not always the best and does not always avert the risk of war. I will suggest another equally important proposition, and it is this—it can never be wise in such a case to resort to such a weapon because it does the nation which uses it more harm than the nation against which it is directed. It may do infinitely greater injury to your own trade by retaliation than the injury you inflict upon the country against whom that retaliation is directed. I repeat that it is obvious from this correspondence that we are not face to face with any such situation. I earnestly hope, as Baron von Richthofen says, and as Lord Lansdowne says, that this matter is going to be settled by friendly negotiation. I have risen for the purpose of pointing out that this notion that we must make some fundamental change in our fiscal system to have the power of dealing with a situation like this is, if I may so call it, a bogey, conjured up absolutely out of nothing, which has been magnified, at any rate, into unnatural and monstrous proportions in order to curdle the blood and muddle the brains of ignorant and nervous people.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (MR. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): I am not quite sure that I understand the object with which the right hon. Gentleman has given us his version of the history of the transaction in connection with preferential duties between the colonies and the mother country. I fear I failed to appreciate rightly whether he thought that we delayed action too long, or whether he disapproved of the action which we did take. He appeared to hesitate between the two lines. Does he think that we have done in 1903 what we ought to have done in 1899, or that what we have done in 1903 ought not to have been done at all?

*MR. ASQUITH: You have done nothing that I know of.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I beg the right hon. Gentleman's pardon. We made representations to Germany which changed the whole face of the negotiations. And let me tell him that is a good deal to have done. When the right hon. Gentleman criticises us in reference to this long period in which he says we have done nothing, does he think we ought to have taken action sooner, or does he mean that we ought not to have taken action at all? I am at a loss to understand. In his ambiguous and double-faced criticism of the Government it appears to me that the right hon. Gentleman has not given a strictly accurate account of the facts. When I say "double-faced" I do not mean to use the phrase in an offensive sense; I mean looking two ways, and having an opposite aspect. The right hon. Gentleman seems to think that everything Baron von Richthofen said in 1903 was said to us by the German Government in 1899. That really is not the case. He will find the passage which he quotes is a passage not from representations made to our Ambassador, not from representations made to this Government at all, but from a speech by Baron von Richthofen in the Reichstag. He will find that that speech was not connected with Canadian tariffs—I think I am right in saying this—but with some action taken by Barbados, and what Barbados has done does not at all correspond with what Canada has done. Barbados did not propose differential duties simply for the exemption of the mother country. Barbados made an arrangement in which other countries besides the mother country were involved. I believe I have given an accurate account of the transaction, but I admit I have only hastily glanced at it while the right hon. Gentleman was speaking, and I may possibly have made a mistake, though I do not think I have.

MR. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.): Baron von Richthofen's speech was made on the question of the adoption of the Bill, which would have had general application.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The occasion of it was not Canada, but Barbados, and the action of Barbados was not parallel with the action of Canada. But I regard that aspect of the controversy as of secondary importance. After all, what does the complaint of the right hon. Gentleman amount to, if it is a complaint? An assertion that we have done nothing for two years. Those, Sir, were two years in which we were involved in a tremendous struggle in South Africa, not very convenient years, not a very suitable opportunity, for entering into a controversy, which I admit was not at that time a pressing controversy, with a Continental neighbour. The right hon. Gentleman has truly said that Canada was not suffering from this action of Germany. If she had been suffering from it, we should have been obliged then and there, at whatever cost, to have intervened in her favour. She was not suffering financially; and it seems to me that it was not only not imprudent, but it was most wise and most prudent not to press on in haste at that particular juncture of our history a diplomatic controversy which had no pressing or immediate financial importance to the colony concerned. There is a much more important question behind that on which the right hon. Gentleman, in spite of the sentence which fell from him at the end of his speech, has not given us a very clear lead. He talked about unfriendly action. I do not know whether I came under the condemnation of the right hon. Gentleman or not; but I am, at all events, not sufficiently clear-headed to have discovered exactly what the policy is which he recommends. Is he, or is he not, when one of our colonies is discriminated against because it gives preferential treatment to the mother country—is he, or is he not, in favour of an absolutely passive attitude? That is a perfectly clear and explicit question. I am ready to give it, for my own part, a perfectly clear and explicit answer. Is the right hon. Gentleman, or are his friends? I understand that they are not. The right hon. Gentleman told us a great deal of what free traders could do and could not do, what is consistent with free trade and what is not consistent with free trade. And even there I did not quite follow him, because I understood it was inconsistent with free trade ever to attempt to modify a foreign tariff in a free trade direction by threatening any fiscal action on our part; but it was not inconsistent with free trade to go to war, as I understand it, supposing fiscal action is taken against us individually, and not against other nations. I do not follow the right hon. Gentleman's view. I presume that he will admit that a retaliatory tariff is less expensive and, on the whole, less objectionable than war.

*MR. ASQUITH assented.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Very well. He will admit that, therefore, if war is justified by an unfriendly act, *à fortiori*, retaliation is justified.

*MR. ASQUITH: I never mentioned or suggested war.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The right hon. Gentleman talked of the rights of nations and what they regard as unfriendly acts. If that did not mean war I do not know what it did mean. At all events, he will admit that the milder, and less costly, and on the whole, more humane method of dealing with this unfriendly act is to deal with it by fiscal retaliation rather than by military retaliation. His view as a free trader is this—and he talked with an air of pontifical orthodoxy which, I must say, surprised me—that if a nation directs its tariffs against this country to a greater degree than it directs its tariff hostility against other countries, that is an unfriendly act and against that you may retaliate in order to produce a modification of the tariff; but if the modification affects other countries besides this country, then free trade comes in, and free trade orthodoxy absolutely forbids any such action. I am not quite sure whether that is logic. The right hon. Gentleman should reconsider the theoretical basis of his policy. In the meanwhile, I should be grateful for an explicit answer to the question I have put. Am I wrong in understanding that, according to the right hon. Gentleman's view, Germany may do what it likes against one of our colonies and we must not retaliate? Is that his view or is it not? It is not our view. The views which we hold may or may not be inconsistent with the right hon. Gentleman's views of political economy and of free trade. Whether they are or are not inconsistent with his view, they are opinions to which we adhere; they appear to us to be the only opinions which, as members of the Empire, we can consistently hold, and I do not believe that the right hon Gentleman with all his ingenuity, will ever persuade the citizens of this country to take any other attitude upon this subject. I am afraid I have travelled a little beyond the Vote which my noble friend is defending, but it will be admitted that I have little choice after the speech which the right hon. Gentleman has made. I can only hope that I have succeeded in making my position more clear and explicit than the right hon. Gentleman has been able to make his view to those of us who have listened to him attentively on this subject.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The only contribution that I am aware that the right hon. Gentleman has made towards the exposition of his views to the House and to the country is to demand in a peremptory fashion from my right hon. friend beside me what his views are. The whole country is waiting with the utmost impatience to know what the views of the right hon. Gentleman are — what the proposals of the Government are in general, but particularly what are the views of the right hon. Gentleman himself —whether his convictions are still in a perfectly unsettled state, or whether he has really at last been able to come to some conclusion or other on the subject. And it is in this condition in which he has set himself before the country that he thinks he triumphantly disposes of the arguments of my right hon. friend by asking him what he would do in certain circumstances. The right hon. Gentleman and his colleagues cannot get out, as it seems to me, of this dilemma with regard to the question of the colonies. Have they fiscal independence, or have they not? You cannot have it both ways. Which is the way that the Government prefer and adopt? The right hon. Gentleman talked of being double-faced, and looking both ways. The Government have been looking both ways—first one way and then another—throughout these proceedings. Here is an interesting document. I am not going into the question of Baron von Richthofen and all the circumstances contained in the Blue-book, which, I think, have been sufficiently examined and criticised. But I have here a little document, which, I think, throws some light upon the subject. It is a treaty recently concluded with the Government of Persia—"Ratifications exchanged at Teheran on 27th May, 1903." What does Article 2 of this Treaty say? This Government, who want to know everybody else's views, have during the last four or five years said first one thing and then another. Article 2 of this treaty says—

> "It is formally stipulated that British subjects and British imports into Persia, as well as Persian subjects and Persian imports into the British Empire, shall continue to enjoy under all conditions most-favoured-nation treatment. It is understood that a British colony having a special Customs tariff, and which may cease to grant most-favoured-nation treatment to Persian imports, will no longer have the right to claim the same treatment for its own imports into Persia."

I want to know what does this point to if it does not point to the case of preferential duties between the colonies and the mother country, and the mother country, forsooth, is to go to the rescue——

*LORD CRANBORNE: If the right hon. Gentleman will permit me to interrupt him, I would say that the negotiators on behalf of the Persian Government were not so unreasonable as the right hon. Gentleman supposes. We made specific inquiry whether they considered that the passage which the right hon. Gentleman has read would exclude the colonies in respect of Persian trade from making a special arrangement with the mother country, and we were informed that the Persian Government did not take that view at all, and that they looked upon what passed between us and the colonies as a purely domestic matter.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I would suggest that the noble Lord should procure the cancelling of this treaty with Persia, and substitution of a new treaty more exactly expressing what he says. When did they receive this assurance from the Government of Persia? I deal with the words of the treaty, and I say this can point to nothing else but the institution of preferential duties with the mother country, and this is the way the mother country goes to the rescue of her children. The next clause is not quite so explicit, but it is in the same sense—

> "In the event of the United Kingdom establishing duties in its general tariff without previous agreement with Persia,"

and so on, then—

> "Persia shall have the right to impose in its turn corresponding duties on articles of the same description coming from the United Kingdom."

I say the whole of this arrangement with Persia is inconsistent with the theories put forward now by the Government in respect of this matter. And although I said I would pass over Baron von Richthofen's little episode, yet I think there is this point in it which has not been noticed, but which is worth attending to. What he alleges is that the Reichstag may make difficulties in the event of preferential duties being granted in the case not only of Canada, but possibly in the case of South Africa. It appears to be the expectation or the fear of that course being taken in South Africa that is especially likely to affect the judgment of the Reichstag. We have had a convention within a short time at Bloemfontein. The representatives, the so-called representatives, of the different States in South Africa were present, and they have agreed to allow preferential duties to the mother country. But two of those States agreeing to take this course are Crown colonies, not self-governing colonies, so that surely in that case the mother country would be brought in. That may be one of the reasons why the Baron von Richthofen considers that action against the mother country would be justified. I think that is a fair conclusion to come to. It is not a case in South Africa of self-governing colonies alone, but there are other colonies which must be held by foreign Powers to stand or fall with the interests of the mother country.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: Does the right hon. Gentleman suggest that, in the event of Germany retaliating against the mother country, because her Crown colonies give her preference, we should not interfere and retaliate again?

SIR H CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I think the Baron von Richthofen or any one else, would be very likely to say that if the Crown colonies, for which the right hon. Gentleman is responsible, took a certain course, then he cannot, in another capacity, refuse the responsibility which he has so assumed.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: And would you not allow us to defend ourselves?

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: That is a very ingenious, but not very effective, method of getting out of the difficulty. We can deal with the case when it arises if we are called upon to deal with it. It is the right hon. Gentleman himself and the Prime Minister who are now advising the country as to the general policy they are to pursue. It is they who have to meet these questions when they arise, and not we who sit on this side of the House. As to the question of retaliation, the right hon. Gentleman asked triumphantly, as I have said, whether retaliation would be resorted to. My right hon. friend, in very clear and very strong language, showed how mischievous a policy of retaliation in most cases is—how it recoils upon those who use it much more than it injures those against whom it is employed. Beyond stating those general principles he was not called upon, and he is really not in a position, to answer the particular question put by the right hon. Gentleman.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): On probably the last occasion on which the House will have the opportunity of discussing questions on the Foreign Office Vote I wish to call the attention of the Committee and the noble Lord to what I consider very little less than a public scandal, for which the Foreign Office is directly responsible. It has always been the boast of the Government of this country that it has an arm long enough and strong enough to protect the liberty and property of British subjects throughout the world, and the question I desire to bring under the attention of the noble Lord is an instance where the Government of England has lamentably failed in the duty of protecting the property of British subjects resident in a foreign nation. I allude to the recent confiscation of the property of a number of British subjects belonging to a religious order in Douai. Now, I am quite aware of the fact that it is not competent for me on this occasion to discuss the policy which the French Government has been pursuing with reference to these orders in France. Whatever our individual opinions upon that subject may be, and however strongly some of us may believe that that policy is a disgrace to Christendom; at the same time it would not be in order for me to enter upon a discussion of that policy at this moment. The question I desire to raise is a very narrow and a very simple one, and does not call in question the general policy of the French Government with reference to the expulsion of these orders from France. The case of the Benedictine monks in Douai is a very remarkable and singular one. The history of their establishment in Douai is a most interesting one. The foundation dates back to the seventeenth century. It was established entirely by English money and by Englishmen, and it has devoted itself entirely to the education of English youths; and, as I understand, it has not been possible for this institution either to have French priests amongst them or to educate a French boy. Well, from the day of its establishment down to the very day when it ceased to exist that establishment was devoted, as I have said, entirely to English purposes and was carried on by Englishmen. The property of the institution was always recognised by the French Government as English property. It is very interesting to remember that in the time of the great Revolution when the National Assembly in Paris ordered the suppression of all similar religious institutions throughout the country, a special exemption was made in the case of Douai, on the distinct ground that it was British property, and when they were carrying out the decree of the Convention, and when the property of these religious institutions in France was seized and sold, this particular establishment to which I allude was exempted on the ground that it was British property, and should not be touched. But shortly afterwards when war broke out between France and this country, the property was seized by the French Government because it was British property. The National Convention decreed the arrest of British subjects and the confiscation of their property, and under that order the monks of Douai were arrested and sent to jail, and their property was confiscated. But after a while, when Napoleon came upon the scene, a better frame of mind sprang up in France, and almost immediately negotiations were set afoot for the purpose of considering whether the British property should not be restored, and, after years of investigation and negotiation, finally the Treaty of Paris in 1814 secured that this confiscated property belonging to English subjects ought to be restored.

*LORD CRANBORNE: Before the Treaty of Paris.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: Well, if I am wrong the noble Lord can, I daresay, set me right. At any rate, at that time investigations whether this property should be given back were set on foot. What had occurred is most interesting. Some of it could not be returned because it was destroyed. Other parts of it were intact and could be restored. What happened was this: a sum of money amounting, I believe, to something like £300,000 was given by the French Government to the English Government in compensation for that portion of the property which had been ruined and destroyed, and the British Government, when it came to the distributing of the money to their subjects, held that because this property had been used for Catholic purposes—that being before the Catholic Emancipation Act was passed — they could not restore it, and they did not restore it, and I believe that from that day to this it has remained in their hands. But I only mention that incidentally because that is not at all the property I am speaking of now. I put the question, whether they ought not to get a share of that £300,000, aside altogether. I am not dealing with the property which was not destroyed at the time of the Revolution, and which remained intact, and which was given back to them, I think, in the year 1818. From that day to this, this institution remained there in the enjoyment of its property, and nobody suggested that it was anything else than British property, and the Government themselves do not deny that it is essentially British property. When the law was passed in France for the suppression of the collegiate institutions of this kind, everybody thought that by reason of the past history of the institution the new law would not apply to it at all, and the monks of Douai were informed by the British representatives in France that in their opinion they would be perfectly safe. But, notwithstanding that, to make assurance doubly sure, they sent in a petition for authorisation. Their petition for authorisation was never even examined. The examination was refused, and they were told that at the end of two or three months they should leave their college, and when the time was up to their intense surprise not only were they forced to leave, but an official of the Government walked in and seized their entire property. Their country-house and grounds, their college buildings, their chapels, their library of twenty thousand books, even their personal property, was seized, and they were turned out with the clothes on their backs and their breviaries. Every penny of that property was British property invested by British subjects for British purposes, and every penny of it was confiscated. That seemed an extraordinary state of things, and one would have thought that the British Government was strong enough, and willing enough, to prevent it.

He believed during the last thirty years large sums of money had been spent upon this college. Every penny of it was English money, and an extraordinary thing occurred within the last few years. A well-known English gentleman, a Mr. Nall, well known probably to many Members of this House, a most benevolent and charitable man, built a new wing and spent £10,000 of his own money on it. He took up his residence there; and would it be believed that, although he never transferred this wing in any way to the Benedictines, and thought it was therefore his own property, he was turned out of it, and his property there which cost £10,000 was gone, and even as regarded his own

private property—his furniture, his books—he had the greatest possible difficulty in retaining it. It seemed inconceivable. The complaint which the Douai Benedictines made was not about their expulsion. They were there in a sense, he agreed, as guests of the French nation, enjoying French hospitality on French soil. If France wished to withdraw that hospitality, and put them out of the country, that was a matter for France. They had no right to complain of that, although they knew that such conduct is a reproach to the civilisation of the 20th century. What he complained of was the monstrous, barefaced, open robbery of the private property of these English gentlemen, who devoted their lives and all their English money to the education of the English students at their colleges. What he was asking of the Government was not any interference on the ground of expulsion. What he asked was the intervention of the Government to prevent this open and bare-faced robbery. Surely, it had always been the boast of the British Government that they could defend the property, as well as the lives of their fellow-subjects in all parts of the world. The Benedictines naturally appealed to the Government, and Abbot Gasquet, the head of the Order in England, entered into communication with Lord Lansdowne upon the subject. He would read some extracts of the correspondence to show the attitude taken up by the Foreign Office on this matter. Abbot Gasquet wrote on 19th of April from Douai:

> "We had been repeatedly assured by the authorities of this town, including the Mayor and the Deputies to the Chamber, that the laws lately passed in regard to the French religious corporations would not be found to affect our position as a wholly English establishment. Beyond this the English Ambassador in Paris declared most positively that even if our College should be closed, by an application of the laws, there could be, in our case, nothing in the way of confiscation of goods, nor any taking possession of our movables, with a view to a compulsory sale of what was unquestionably the property of English subjects. I was astonished, therefore, to find on my arrival here yesterday that not only had a decree been received directing that this establishment should be closed within three months, but that a liquidator had been appointed and had commenced his work by sequestrating our goods and compiling an inventory with a view to their being sold."

He enclosed with that letter to Lord Lansdowne a memorandum setting forth the history of the College, and showing how the foundation was made from purely English money. Here was the answer Abbot Gasquet received from the Foreign Office:

> "I am to inform you that the Benedictine College at Douai, being situate in France, is governed by the laws of that country and not by the law of England. His Majesty's Ambassador at Paris took every step which was possible in the interests of the English bodies in France during the consideration of the Association Bill in the Chamber of Deputies, but it is beyond the power of His Majesty's Government to interfere to protect the community at Douai from the operation of the law of the country in which their establishment is situate."

Abbot Gasquet replied to that letter on the 5th of May, as follows:

> "I made no appeal to you to use the influence and the authority of the British Government to enable us to stay in France in opposition to the law closing all similar establishments. My appeal was, as Englishmen, for the protection of our property, all of which is undoubtedly English, from the confiscation by the French Government which not only threatens it but which has already been begun. I shall be glad if your Lordship will award me an interview on this pressing subject at any time convenient to you. I can explain the matter verbally better than by letter, and could answer any questions about the status of our College and property. I cannot conceive that if the facts were known our Ambassador in Paris would sacrifice such large English interests without at least some attempt to save them. Meantime, I beg to enclose for your information a statement of facts in regard to our property in France which, I hope, will be sufficient to convince you that the French Government has always acknowledged the property in question as British."

Lord Lansdowne replied to that letter as follows—

> "His Majesty's Ambassador at Paris is fully aware of the circumstances of the case and has done what is possible to obtain considerate treatment for the English Benedictines, but H.M. Government have no *locus standi* for further intervention. The points raised in your letter will, however, be carefully examined in consultation with Sir Edmund Monson and the law officers of the Crown."

Had they no *locus standi* in Venezuela? It was always the boast of the English Government that they had a *locus standi* where robbery and oppression was meted out to their fellow-subjects. Then there was the final letter from Abbot Gasquet, in which he stated—

> "The question I raised was a claim for compensation for the confiscation of British property by the application of the new French laws. It is not a question of law, for, as I understand, no question of compensation for injury made by one civilised nation to another for injury done to property ever is. It is a question of diplomatic representation and international equity, and even after the great French Revolution compensation was made for similar property under the Treaty of Paris. It is true some did not receive the money from the English Government of the time; but the French Government admitted the justice and the claim by paying it."

It was clear from the correspondence that the Government did intervene at one stage when the Associations Law was passing through the French Chamber. Apparently the Government instructed their representative in Paris to use his good offices with the French Government; but what he wanted to know was, did the Government make any representations on the question of compensation? That was an entirely subsequent question. The English Orders had been made amenable under the general law, and had been expelled; but he wished to know whether any representations had been made on the subject of compensation. He hoped the noble Lord would be able to give an answer to the question. If representations had been made and had failed, then the British Government was in a most humiliating position. If no representations had been made, he would beg our Government to make them at once.

They had heard a great deal about the *rapprochement* between France and England—they all heard of it with the greatest interest for the sake of peace—and of the reception of the King in Paris, and the President of the French Republic in London, and even in this very building last evening expressions of goodwill were extended to representatives of the French nation. It was to the highest interests of France, as well as of England, that the two countries should remain good friends under existing conditions. Was it conceivable that in such circumstances a really determined demand on the part of the British Government to the French Government would be unsuccessful. They knew perfectly well it would not. If Sir Edmund Monson were in earnest in this matter, compensation would be given and justice done to those British subjects. He hoped the noble Lord would be able to give him an assurance in the matter. Reading the papers on Venezuela, he found that the cause of the stern action taken by England towards that country was, forsooth, because British property had been seized; and on the strength of that the Government did not hesitate to send its fleet, in conjunction with Germany, into Venezuelan waters, and to threaten the extinction of Venezuela as a state. He was not suggesting that the Government should have recourse to similar means in regard to France; but it was a humiliating and contemptible position for the Government to occupy, that while they took action like that against Venezuela, they would not even use their good offices with a great friendly nation like France to protect the interests of British subjects. This was a case of hardship quite apart from the Associations law. He had his own opinion about that Law; but the question he now raised was a question of confiscation of admittedly British property, held by British subjects. He hoped action would be taken which would secure justice to the Benedictines.

*LORD CRANBORNE: I cannot be surprised at the tone of the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite, who speaks on this matter with some heat. I quite understand how warmly his sympathy must be enlisted on behalf of these ecclesiastics. I cannot profess not to agree with him in deploring what has taken place through the political act of the French Legislature. On no occasion has such a law ever been passed in this country, and we cannot but be surprised, if I may say so without offence to the French nation, that their Government should have introduced such a law. I am sorry that our intervention has not been successful, because, as the hon. and learned Gentleman has well said, we have always professed to do our utmost to protect British subjects in every part of the world, but especially, where the particular community whose interests are at stake belong to a small minority of England, do we feel bound in honour to do what we can to safeguard their interests. I think, for the reasons I have stated, the hon. and learned Gentleman has not been quite fair to the Government. We have done the very best we can.

Mr. John Redmond.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: You have not intervened on the question of compensation.

*LORD CRANBORNE: We intervened on the question of status and property. It is quite possible, as the hon. and learned Gentleman told us just now, that the local authorities at Douai had assured the Abbot that they thought the position of this establishment would not be included in the general law.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: Sir Edmund Monson stated that.

*LORD CRANBORNE: That was, I think, the general view, because at the time it was supposed that the stringent provisions of this law would not be universally applied in France. I do not mean that it was thought that exceptions would be made on behalf of foreign establishments, but it was thought that the French Government themselves would have made distinctions. Various communities were invited to apply for authorisation, and it was generally conceded that in a large number of cases authorisation would be granted; but whatever the original intention was it was abandoned, and in deference to French public opinion the law was applied practically universally. The hon. and learned Gentleman has spoken of cruelties inflicted on British subjects in various parts of the world, whose rights had been vindicated. But our contention has always been that our subjects were entitled to be treated according to law and on an equality with the subjects of the foreign Power concerned. Unfortunately we were not able to apply the rule in this case. This Order was not one whit worse treated than any other French Order. We were met at once by the answer of the French Government: "We cannot make exceptions in the case of one community. If they live in France they live under the French law."

MR. JOHN REDMOND: They are leaving the country.

*LORD CRANBORNE: I do not think the hon. and learned Gentleman has realised that the French law not merely expels the religious Orders, but also sequestrates their property. I have a word or two to say on the subject of sequestration before I sit down, but the French law went so far as to sequestrate the property of these Orders, and therefore it is impossible to make the appeal we generally do. We could not say they were treating Englishmen worse than anybody else, where everybody was being treated precisely alike. Then we put forward our treaty rights and we quoted the Treaty of Paris. We quoted the Treaty of Paris as guaranteeing the protection of property, but it was said that the property in this case was the property of communities and not of persons, and that, therefore, it did not come within the purview of the Treaty of Paris. There is a further answer on behalf of the French Government. They said that this establishment had been so long in France, and so long living under French laws, that it must be considered a French establishment and not English. Therefore they declined to listen to our appeal for treaty rights. Hon. Members will admit therefore that we did intervene. We presented a reasonable Memorandum, going at length into a claim which we thought could be set up. We did appeal to our treaty rights, and the reply was that as these English gentlemen lived in France they must be subject to French law, and the French Government went so far as so say that they could not stand up before their own public opinion to the length of saying that they were going to treat foreigners better than they treated their own citizens.

MR. JOHN REDMOND: I should be very glad if the noble Lord could say precisely whether the Memorandum was presented to the French Government in respect to compensation. I can quite understand the French Government resenting the Memorandum on the other point.

*LORD CRANBORNE: The French Government claimed that the property this establishment occupied became sequestrated to the French Government, just in the same way as the property of the corresponding French Orders. Now let me consider a moment the property which has been sequestrated. We do not know precisely what it is they claim to have been deprived of. There is no doubt that under the French law the property actually occupied by these Orders is sequestrated, but the whole of the property of the Benedictines of Douai does not come within this category. There is, for example, the personal property of the Order; then there is a certain endowment. Probably the hon. and learned Gentleman knows that there is an endowment to the Benedictines of Douai invested; that there is a sort of Government trustee who has paid the money arising out of the endowment to the Order. I am not at all sure that that is sequestrated under the law. When we speak of sequestration, let us not be too sure that the whole of the property is gone. I think the Abbot and the Order would be well advised to exhaust their legal remedy in the French Courts in order to ascertain how far the expelling law carries the power of sequestration. If they then found that, after all, the law did not involve the sequestration of the whole of their property, and came to the British Government and said: "Our property is in France; it is not all sequestrated under the law; we ask your intervention in order to secure us our rights," I can assure the hon. and learned Member that wherever and to whatever extent it can be shown that these gentlemen have been deprived, contrary to the law, of what belongs to them, we shall be not only willing but anxious to do all and everything in our power to assist them. Beyond that it is very difficult for the British Government to go. We can protest, and we have protested. We can represent the hardships with which these gentlemen have been treated, but we can hardly ask the French Government to accord to Englishmen treatment different from what they accord to their own citizens. I thoroughly sympathise with the point of view of the hon. and learned Member, but I do not see, other than the steps I have suggested, that there is anything more in the power of the Government that we can do.

*MR. NORMAN (Wolverhampton, S.) congratulated the noble Lord on the change of tone he had adopted in this debate as compared with previous occasions. As a rule he had been too apt to take the criticisms of the Committee—to use a now historic phrase—"lying down," or at any rate, with great mildness, but this afternoon he had turned on his critics with marked determination, and had administered a severe, but not altogether unmerited, castigation upon his redoubtable adversary, the hon. member for King's Lynn. The noble Lord, however, had made one or two statements which were to be regretted, as they hardly represented the facts. The real reason why Lord Lansdowne did not accompany the King on his visit abroad was not the fact that his absence would have brought the whole machinery of international politics in this country to a standstill, as the noble Lord had alleged, but the fact that the King went abroad, not for the purpose of securing or helping to secure that class of definite understanding to which the presence of the Foreign Minister was necessary, but to convey, as only His Majesty himself could, the feelings of the people rather than the desires of the Government. If the Foreign Minister had accompanied the King the European Press would at once have been filled with all sorts of suppositions and mysterious arguments which would have entirely prevented the results which His Majesty's tact and personal accomplishments had secured. As to Germany and Venezuela, the noble Lord had made a statement of the most remarkable character. The alliance with Germany was, without exception, the greatest mistake in foreign politics made by this country for many years. Everybody in close touch with American opinion, official and non-official, knew that it nearly had the result of destroying all the good that was accomplished in the relations between this country and the United States at the time of and after the Spanish War. The noble Lord said that objection to this alliance was due to the attitude of Germany towards this country during the South African War. It was nothing of the kind. The German attitude was not alleged by any serious critic as a reason against co-operation between Great Britain and Germany. The real reason was that Venezuela lay closely within the sphere of influence of the United States, that we were in such relations with the United States that any dispute of that kind could be settled in the most friendly manner, and that there was not the slightest reason for dragging any foreign Power into these negotiations, or acts of war as they became; still less was there any ground for allying ourselves with a Power whose objects in those territories were believed, rightly or wrongly, by the people of the United States to be antagonistic to their interests. As to the Baghdad Railway, the noble Lord had said he did not think public opinion in this country had exercised much influence on the result.

*LORD CRANBORNE said he did not say that.

*MR. NORMAN said that was what he understood.

*LORD CRANBORNE said that, on the contrary, what he stated was that, having regard to the delicacy of the financial operations involved, public opinion had great weight, and made it impossible for the Government to secure the terms which they considered essential before they could give their consent to the scheme.

*MR. NORMAN said the point he was about to make was that the convention or proposed arrangement between this mysterious group of financiers, their colleagues in Germany and the British Government, was in the possession of the British Government for a fortnight, and that during that fortnight the attitude of the Government towards the proposal was friendly. The terms were then published in *The Times* newspaper, and such was the effect on public opinion that the Government dropped the scheme like a hot potato.

*LORD CRANBORNE said the hon. Member had fallen into the same error as almost every other critic. The terms published in *The Times* were not those which the Government were considering. No reasonable body would ever have dreamt of submitting such terms to the British Government; they would not have been looked at for a moment.

*MR. NORMAN: Has the Government ever put forward that excuse before?

*LORD CRANBORNE: Oh, yes!

*MR. NORMAN: I have never seen it. Were not the terms substantially the same?

*LORD CRANBORNE: No; not in the least.

*MR. NORMAN said the whole battle was fought out on the floor of the House and in the country on the basis of those terms.

*LORD CRANBORNE said he was not responsible for that.

*MR. NORMAN said his point was that only when the approximate terms were finally known did the Government so promptly relinquish the scheme. As to the other matters which had been discussed, nobody who had studied the correspondence and listened to the debate could come to any other conclusion than that this matter of retaliation against Germany had been dragged to light to serve the convenience of those who desired to raise the question of our fiscal policy. On that point he had only one question to ask—viz., whether or not Italy had taken a similar step towards Canada, and, if so, whether the Government had taken any steps in the matter.

*LORD CRANBORNE said he had not had his attention directed to the matter, but he thought he might safely deny anything of the sort.

*MR. NORMAN then reminded the Committee that in the course of the debate on the Address he called attention to the question of the Chinese indemnity, contending that the British Government were acting in a somewhat harsh manner towards the Chinese Government. Since then the Government had relaxed its attitude, and was now prepared to accept payment in silver up to a certain date, the deficit which accumulated in the meantime to be dealt with as might afterwards be arranged. That was a rather curious arrangement, because if it was not right that the Chinese should pay the whole in gold, there was no reason why they should pay in gold at all. The matter was of some importance, because France and Russia were taking somewhat active steps in the matter of the payment, even going so far as to threaten the re-occupation of portions of Chinese territory. Already the Commission of Bankers sitting in Shanghai had fixed an arbitrary rate of exchange for the tael, which would impose a loss of something like £40,000 on the Chinese. Under these circumstances he desired to know what kind of protest, if any, the Government had made, and in what way they proposed to follow up the protest. The matter was a somewhat serious one, and they desired to know exactly what was the attitude of His Majesty's Government. During the debate on the Address, he had raised the question of the pending commercial treaty with China, and had ventured to assert that it would not come into operation. The noble Lord was not then able to agree with what he then said. On the contrary, the noble Lord anticipated its immediate success, and proudly accepted the congratulations of the hon. Member for the Epsom division. Considerable time had now elapsed, the treaty was no nearer acceptance, and perhaps the noble Lord would be able to tell them what stage precisely they had got to as regarded this treaty and the American treaty. There was also the question of Manchuria, which was most serious of all. The facts were simple. Russia agreed to evacuate by a certain date, but she did not do so; on the contrary, all the time she made new demands, whilst some of her representatives actually denied that those demands were being made. Russia was still detaining the revenues of one of the treaty ports which, by the very treaty she had signed, ought to belong equally to the Powers as part of the guarantee for the indemnity. All sorts of preferential arrangements on behalf of Russia were being made, or attempted to be made, with the Chinese Government. He was all for an understanding with the Russian Government, but the only way to have an understanding with Russia was to meet her perfectly frankly and plainly face to face upon these questions as they arose. Russia had behaved in a way which could not command the approval of anyone. The method of her diplomacy could only be met by a firm attitude on the part of the British Government, and by that attitude alone could they arrive at a satisfactory understanding. The question was far more serious in regard to Japan, and the occupation of Manchuria by Russia.

They had seen a great many alarming statements on this question in the newspapers. They had heard that Japan had been preparing for war, and that an ultimatum was about to be launched. The situation was most serious, as under the Japanese Treaty this country might be dragged into the field of conflict in the Far East. This was a danger arising out of the Japanese Treaty, which some of them pointed out in the debate on the adjournment of the House when the Agreement was first signed. If the noble Lord could say anything to allay their natural anxiety on this question, he was sure it would be a very great relief, not only to themselves, but to other nations.

Lord EDMUND TALBOT (Sussex, Chichester) said he simply wished to state his hearty concurrence in every word which had fallen from the hon. and learned Member opposite, in regard to the treatment of the Benedictine monks, and he also recognised fully the sympathetic tone of the noble Lord upon this question. He took the noble Lord's reply to mean that in the opinion of His Majesty's Government, this question was not yet settled, and they were willing to carry on negotiations and assist these people in obtaining compensation for the property they had lost. He wished to know whether the correspondence upon this subject between the British Government and the French Government would be laid upon the Table of the House.

*Mr. JOSEPH WALTON (Yorkshire, W.R., Barnsley) said he had listened with much disappointment to the reply of the noble Lord in regard to the British subjects in France who had suffered the confiscation of their property by the French Government. He had had conveyed to him certain information in regard to this matter, which he believed to be perfectly reliable, and he only regretted that in this case they had had such an example of the impotence of His Majesty's Government to protect the interests and rights of property of British subjects. He trusted His Majesty's Government would get a little more backbone put into the conduct of all negotiations in regard to foreign policy. He felt that there had been a lamentable want of backbone in the whole foreign policy of this country for years past, and he regarded the statement made by the noble Lord as an indication of the extreme feebleness and weakness of the action taken by the Foreign Office. He welcomed the cordial relations which had been recently developed between England and France, but he would venture to suggest that the question of the confiscation of the property of the Benedictine monks in France should be referred to the Hague tribunal for arbitration and settlement. It seemed to him to be eminently a case which might suitably be referred to this particular tribunal, and it would be a most encouraging thing in the interests of humanity and civilisation and the peace of the world if disputes of this kind could oftener be referred to that tribunal for settlement. With regard to foreign affairs, ever since he had the honour of becoming a Member of the House of Commons he had given his attention mainly to the question of promoting British commercial interests, and personally he welcomed the awakened interest on the part of the whole nation which had recently taken place in the most important questions of the trade and commerce of the Empire. They had had an interesting discussion that day upon the question of preferential tariffs and the question of retaliation on the part of foreign nations. Reference had been made to the last commercial treaty concluded by the Foreign Office with Persia. This treaty was finally concluded on the 3rd of February last, but if the treaty was being negotiated at the present time he was pretty certain His Majesty's Government would have taken care not only to have some verbal assurance from the Government of Persia, but they would insist upon a clause being actually inserted in the treaty setting forth that this country should be at liberty if it thought fit to adopt a system of preferential tariffs within the British Empire without violating the most-favoured-nation clause. He observed that amongst those who negotiated the treaty on the part of His Majesty the Shah were the Persian Prime Minister as well as the Administrator General of Customs. Were His Majesty's Government absolutely certain that the latter had full authority as the plenipotentiary of the Persian Government to sign this treaty?

*Lord CRANBORNE: The hon. Member is in error. It was only by a mistake that the treaty was issued to the

House in that form. The Persian plenipotentiary signed the Persian text. This ought to have been mentioned in the Paper, but as a matter of fact both plenipotentiaries signed the treaty.

*Mr. JOSEPH WALTON said he was glad to hear that statement, because it confirmed that he was drawing attention to a point which appeared on the face of it incorrect, and which might have rendered the treaty invalid, or they might have claimed at some future time that it was not binding. This commercial treaty was better than none at all, but it was bad at the best. This treaty was gladly entered into by Russia, but it was highly unsatisfactory to us as a great commercial nation that the terms and tariffs embodied in this treaty should not have been a tariff arrangement between this Government and the Shah of Persia.

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Committee report Progress; to sit again this evening.

EVENING SITTING.

SUPPLY [19th ALLOTTED DAY].

Considered in Committee:—

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith), in the Chair.

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS ESTIMATES, 1903-4.

CLASS II.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum not exceeding £34,887, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the Charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1904, for the Salaries and Expenses of the Department of His Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs."

Whereupon Motion made, and Question proposed, "That Item A (Salaries, Wages and Allowances) be reduced by £100, in respect of the Salary of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs."—(*Sir Charles Dilke.*)

*MR. JOSEPH WALTON, continuing his speech, said he was referring, when the sitting was suspended, to the commercial treaty recently concluded between this country and Persia. The old original treaty which this one erased was the treaty of 1828, and under that treaty an *ad valorem* duty of 5 per cent. was levied on all merchandise from this country entering into Persia. The new treaty was better than no treaty at all, but it had this serious disadvantage, that in the place of 5 per cent. *ad valorem* duty all round, the new treaty as concluded by Russia with Persia provided for levying less than 5 per cent. *ad valorem* on certain commodities chiefly sent by Russia to Persia, while on commodities chiefly sent by the British Empire to Persia the duty now to be levied was greatly in excess of 5 per cent., and in the case of tea it had been increased from 5 per cent. to 100 per cent. The new commercial treaty concluded by the Government was not one from which the commercial community of Great Britain hoped to derive much satisfaction. He recognised the difficult position in which the Government was placed with regard to this matter, but it was to be regretted that the treaty now entered into, which might be eminently satisfactory to Russia and which might remain in force for many years to come, should be one in which the favoured-nation clause, though strictly speaking was not violated, was in fact violated in-so-far that Russian commodities sent to Persia obtained a lower rate than the 5 per cent. previously imposed, while British commodities in the future would have to pay more than they did under the treaty of Turkoman Chai. It had always been declared by both the Russian and British Governments in regard to Persia, that their policy was directed to upholding the independence and integrity of Persia. What he desired to know was whether the Government had addressed any communications to the Russian Government in regard to what he was bound to consider a violation of the repeated declarations of Russia as to this policy in so far as they were involved by debarring Persia from giving concessions to construct railways to any other Power until the year 1910, and in also debarring Persia from the right to borrow money from any Power except themselves. Those two conditions, which they had imposed upon Persia, in his opinion violated the independence of Persia.

Then he desired to know from the Government whether they had exercised vigilance, and would continue to exercise vigilance, to prevent the Customs receipts of the Persian Gulf Ports and the Province of Faro being allocated in satisfaction of any future loans which Persia might contract with Russia in addition to the £3,500,000 loan already concluded. Then an important point, so far as the British commercial interest in Persia was concerned, was the question of the improvement of the trade routes from the Persian Gulf into the interior of Russia. They knew that the Russians had constructed three commercial highways down into North Persia in order to facilitate their trade and strengthen their political influence in North Persia. He desired no aggressive action on the part of the Government, but he submitted that in the interests of British trade, and especially in the interests of Indian trade with Persia, it was important that the Karun River trade route should be improved; that we should also construct a road to facilitate our commerce from Bunder Abbas through Kerman, and Yezd to Isfahan. Then he wished to know whether the difficulties that were thrown in the way of carrying on trade between India and Persia, by the Quetta-Nushki trade route had been overcome, and whether our Indian fellow subjects were now able to trade freely by that route with Eastern Persia. There were three other routes, and he was glad to learn that some progress was being made in regard to the construction of a road from Kum to Isfahan with a branch through Sultanabad, Diszful, and Shuster. That was a road for which a concession had been obtained by the British Imperial Bank of Persia, and which had recently been taken over by a syndicate. What he wished to know was, whether the Government, either on their own account, or in conjunction with the Government of India, were prepared to give all possible backing to the concessionaires of these highways by subsidies, or in other ways, in order that British trade in Southern Persia at any rate might have the same facilities for its increase as the Russians had already given to Russian commerce by the construction of their three commercial highways from the North into Northern Persia.

In view of the declaration of the Government in regard to the matter of railway concessions in Persia, they were informed that the British had a right to build railways in Southern Persia when Russia built railways in Northern Persia, but that right rested on a very shadowy foundation, a mere verbal assurance given and repeated, and he submitted it was desirable in connection with any agreement entered into for road concessions that there should be a definite recognition of the fact that the British should enjoy a priority of right to construct railways when required over the trade routes covered by these proposed roads. The question of Persia was a fascinating one. It was not so much a question of the volume of trade of the British Empire with Persia, it was because of the proximity of the Persian Empire to our great Indian Empire that the question of maintenance of British influence, especially in Southern Persia, was of such vital importance. We were spending millions of money in the North-West of India with a view to protect the Empire from a possible invasion by Russia, but if by neglecting and by not pursuing, not an aggressive, but a wise, definite, and firm policy of advancing British commercial and political interests in Southern Persia just as Russia had done, and was doing, in Northern Persia, they might avert the possible danger of Russian influence and Russian predominance extending from Northern to Southern Persia, it was the duty of the Government to do so. If Russia gradually succeeded in her demands in Southern as well as Northern Persia, she might eventually be established with a commercial port connected by railways through Persia with the Russian Empire and eventually with a naval base in the Persian Gulf. If the Government did not uphold the British position in Southern Persia it might ultimately result in Russia turning the flank of our mountainous North-West frontier of India and threatening India through Baluchistan and by sea. If that happened the whole teeming millions of India would have the burden thrown upon them of finding out of their poverty many millions more for increasing the defensive forces of the Indian Empire. We had taken upon ourselves the responsibility of guiding the destinies of 250,000,000 of people in India, and it was our bounden duty to protect that Empire from any danger such as he had described from the adjacent country of Persia, whose independence and integrity we had declared it to be our policy to preserve. We had no aggressive designs on Persia, we adhered to our policy with regard to Persia, but what had been felt for years past was that the Government had been supine. They were looking now for a well-considered definite policy to be resolutely pursued, but he was bound to state across the floor of the House that they had not made much advance with regard to this question of insisting that British interests were paramount in the Persian Gulf and must be maintained. He was free to admit that in regard to Persia generally the Government had within the last year or two taken a stronger line for the promotion of British interests. He hoped to-night they would have a still stronger assurance from the noble Lord that the question of British interests in Persia vitally affected the safety of the future of our Indian Empire.

Turning to China there were several questions affecting British interests which at present appeared to be in a pressing and critical condition. First of all there was the question of the evacuation of Manchuria. He would not go back to ancient history; he would merely say the noble Lord and his predecessor had given in this House Russian assurance after Russian assurance that Russia had not the slightest intention of remaining in Manchuria, but that when peace was restored in China they would reconvey Manchuria absolutely as it existed before the crisis to Chinese jurisdiction and control. When peace was declared in China Russia received under the peace protocol no less than £17,000,000 sterling as compensation in connection with the Chinese rising, and on her part agreed to evacuate Manchuria; that on the 8th of April last she would have evacuated one section, including the treaty port of Niuchwang, but instead of doing so on the 18th of April last she presented fresh demands to the Chinese Government. Of course it was strictly denied by Russia that any such demands had been made, but unfortunately her agent, M. Plancon, handed to Mr. Conger, the United States Minister, his own copy of the demands which had been made on China, including demands absolutely antagonistic to the interests of this country. Russia demanded that China should not open any additional treaty ports in Manchuria; she demanded, with regard to Mongolia, which was very far from Manchuria, that it should not have its administration altered without the consent of Russia; she demanded that the Russo-Chinese Bank should be made the Customs Bank of Manchuria, and that all Customs receipts should be paid into it. The new Russian diplomatist, Count Lamsdorf, informed Mr. Hay that Russia had no intention of excluding other countries or to confer exclusive advantages on Russia. He told him that the United States might be sure that nothing would be done to close the doors now open. He protested also, or rather Count Beckendorf protested also, to Lord Lansdowne that the measures to exclude foreign consuls were far from entering into the intentions of the Imperial Government; and to Mr. Hay they said that American commerce and American capital were the two things they most desired to attract. When the matter was raised in this House they had an assurance given to them, which he would not detain the Committee by repeating, by the noble Lord, and a further statement made in another place by Lord Lansdowne, who said—

> "I have received from the Russian Ambassador, to whom I had addressed an inquiry on the subject, a verbal statement to the following effect: 'The information which has reached the British Government as to the conditions required for the evacuation of Manchuria is not at all correct. The discussions which are proceeding at Pekin concern Manchuria alone, and have reference to certain guarantees which are indispensable for securing the most important Russian interest in the province after the withdrawal of the Russian troops. As for measures which might tend to exclude foreign consuls, or obstructing foreign commerce and the use of ports, such measures are far from entering into the intention of the Imperial Government. I consider, on the contrary, that the development of foreign commerce is one of the main objects to which the Russian Government have undertaken the construction of the line of railway in that part of the world."

That was a most satisfactory assurance, and was given on the 2nd of May last. Yet to-night, on the 23rd of July, so far as they knew, no step had been taken to carry into effect the assurances which were then, in the most emphatic way, given by Russia. They knew now that the United States had been putting considerable pressure on Russia, not on the Chinese Government, for they recognised that it was useless to negotiate with the Chinese Government in regard to this matter. They wisely turned their attention to the Government at St. Petersburg, and had been negotiating with them as to the maintenance of the open door in the great country of Manchuria, and as to the free right of other nations to arrange with the Chinese Government to open further treaty ports in that country. It was said a few days ago that these negotiations had terminated successfully, and that two new treaty ports, Ta-tung-kau and Mukden, would be opened without objection on the part of the Russian Government. Unfortunately, they learnt to-day from the papers that that had not yet been agreed to, and that serious difficulties had again arisen. He desired to have from the noble Lord to-night whatever information he could give as to the exact position of the negotiations.

But there was not only the fact of the action of Russia in Manchuria, and the opening of treaty ports in Manchuria, there was the question of the action of Russia in regard to the treaty port of Niuchwang, which was the only treaty port in that great country of Manchuria at present. The trade of that port had doubled in the last four years, and it was a port through which the British Empire did a trade of no less than three millions sterling a year. He wished to know from the noble Lord, in view of the repeated assurances conveyed to the House from the Russian Government with regard to the restoration of Niuchwang, whether anything definite had been arranged to give effect to those assurances. It appeared to him that it had been found to be necessary by the United States Government, as it would be found to be necessary for His Majesty's Government, to negotiate direct with the Government of St. Petersburg on questions of this kind. The Government policy had been declared again and again as being a policy of the maintenance of the open door throughout the Chinese Empire, and the question now was, were they going resolutely to adhere to that policy, and not merely make representations to the Chinese Government, who had not the power to give effect to any arrangement they might make with His Majesty's Government, but that they should rather communicate with the Russian Government at St. Petersburg, in concert, he hoped, with the Japanese and United States Governments. The time had come to face the question of Manchuria and Niuchwang, and to induce Russia to come to an equitable arrangement with regard to Manchuria and the port of Niuchwang, which should be restored fully to the trade of all nations. There was one very important point. Since August, 1900, the Russians had been in possession of the Customs House at Niuchwang, and had collected nearly half a million of money in Customs receipts. That money had been paid into the Russo-Chinese Bank. It was paid into the credit of the Imperial Customs, no doubt, but it was not handed over to the Treasury of the Imperial Customs of China. Yet this money was part of the security for British bondholders who had advanced money to China. He did not think the Government could possibly allow the matter to rest in its present position. Then, again, we had a British quarantine officer at Niuchwang, a Dr. Daly. He had been superseded and a Russian doctor put in his place. That was his information direct from Niuchwang. He pointed out, with regard to the port of Niuchwang, that the trade of Russia was practically *nil*; the whole trade was done by Japan and England, and United States of America. In addition to Dr. Daly being superseded, the British collector of Customs had also been superseded in favour of a Russian collector of Customs. He had a right, under the circumstances, to call the attention of the Government to this matter, and to suggest that they were not rightfully upholding the interests of the British trade, in allowing Russians to remain officials of the treaty port of Niuchwang. The question of British trade in China was one of the most important questions commercially that this country had to consider.

They had heard a great deal about the decay of British trade. He would venture to point out that in China we had a great neutral market without any hostile tariff against us whatever—a country inhabited by 400,000,000 people, and if His Majesty's Government, in the course of their inquiry, would give a little attention to the causes of the decline of British trade in that market, and to the consideration of how they could arrest the decline and give us an increasing trade, he thought it would be infinitely more profitable to this country than the giving of so much attention, as they appeared to be doing, to the cultivation of an increase of our trade with 10,000,000 people in highly protectionist colonies. In the great neutral market of China there were possibilities of trade expansion infinitely greater than in the smaller sphere the Government had now under their special purview. China was only doing a seventh part, in proportion to population, of what Japan was doing. He attributed the decline of British trade in China to the vacillation of His Majesty's Government during recent years—to the fact that they had made a succession of humiliating surrenders of British commercial interests in the Far East. Between 1896 and 1901 Chinese foreign trade had increased £9,000,000 sterling a year, but the trade of the United Kingdom with China had gone down 15 per cent. The Committee, therefore, would see that there was a serious decline in British trade. Those statistics excluded railway material, which was admitted free of duty, and railway material, as the Committee well knew, had been pouring into China from Belgium, Russia, France and Germany within the last few years, but not from this country, because of the failure on the part of our Government to secure a fair share of railway concessions for British subjects. [AN HON. MEMBER: What about prices?] The prices were very much the same, and therefore the quantity would be practically the same for the purpose of his comparison when he said that our trade with China had declined 15 per cent. since 1896. The actual diminution of trade between the British Empire and China was 5 per cent., so that it was specially in the trade of the United Kingdom there was this substantial fall. Our shipping trade with China had also gone down. In 1896 we had 65 per cent., and in 1901 only 54 per cent. of the shipping, whereas the German shipping had advanced from 6 per cent. in 1896 to 16 per cent. in 1901, and Japanese shipping had advanced from 2 per cent. in 1896 to 11 per cent. in 1901. The question of our commerce in China was one of the most important that a manufacturing country like this could possibly have to consider. He desired to know whether the noble Lord could give the Committee any information as to whether the commercial treaty, in regard to which a preliminary agreement was come to, had yet been carried into effect. The new commercial treaty was not entirely satisfactory, for he saw that in the negotiations between China and the United States of America certain further concessions had been made. For instance, in the preliminary treaty concluded by His Majesty's Government the Chinese native Customs were to be continued. He wished to know whether an arrangement of a more favourable character had been come to under which only the native Customs at the ports of entry and the land frontages of China were to be continued and the other native Custom-houses were to be abolished. This question was of vital importance in connection with the new commercial treaty with China. In addition to that there was the question of whether certain works of river improvement, the conservancy of the Whang-poo leading up to Shanghai, the improvement of the river leading to Tien-tsin, which were provided for in the protocol of 1901. He desired to know whether any steps had been taken for the conservancy of those waterways and the removal of obstructions to navigation on the Cantonese waterways. The carrying of these arrangements into effect must be highly beneficial to British trade.

On the question of railway concessions in China the noble Lord told them this afternoon that he could not enter into details. As a commercial man, speaking on behalf of the commercial community of this country, he said that our position in regard to railway construction in China at the present moment was most unsatisfactory. They were told in this House that British concessionaires had secured concessions for 2,800 miles of railways in China.

Though he was glad to know that recently the final concession of a railway from Shanghai to Nankin had been ratified, so far as he knew no other British concession had yet been finally ratified. What did that mean at the present moment? They were told the commercial condition of this country was very serious—that the iron and steel trades were depressed, and that Americans and Germans were dumping down their surplus produce in this country and killing our iron and steel industries. On the other hand, there was China, the richest Empire in the world, being supplied for the first time with a system of railways, and although there were no hostile tariffs against us in that Empire, Russians, French, Germans, Belgians, and Americans were busily engaged laying down these railways. The whole of the rail material and the rolling stock for these railways must be drawn from the countries of the respective concessionaires, and he wished to draw the attention of the Committee to the gross violation of the most-favoured-nation clause, which resulted in the exclusion of British manufacturers from supplying materials. He asked the noble Lord whether this important point had had the attention of the Government, and whether there had not been opportunities for trade sacrificed by the supineness of the Government. It would be, as he had said, infinitely better for our Government to turn their attention to an inquiry into the causes of this condition of things in regard to our trade with the great neutral market of China if they wished to bring real prosperity and a substantial increase of trade to this great manufacturing nation. This matter had been drifting and drifting, and seemed to be making no progress.

He wished to know, also, whether the Government were giving proper diligence to the development of our trade relations with the Indian Empire, which had a population of 300,000,000, and had no hostile tariffs against us. Were the Government determined to direct their earnest attention to the recovery of lost ground in China, to resolutely uphold our treaty rights and commercial interests, and to maintain the open door through that great Empire? Foreign nations were constructing railways in China, and he had pressed again and again in this House that His Majesty's Government ought to seek to secure an international agreement under which all nations would enjoy the same railway rates over the whole of the railways there. He had never yet been able to draw from the Government any definite reply as to whether this most important question was even receiving their consideration. He was glad the Government had wakened up to take some interest in British commerce, and he hoped that the proposals now before the country would prove to be a great blessing in disguise, and that out of the controversy which was now going on there would be developed keener attention on the part of the Government to the promoting of British commercial rights and interests in every part of the world.

*MR. MOON (St. Pancras, N.) said he was in complete accordance with the hon. Member for Barnsley in regard to his historical sketch of the situation in China, but he disputed his view that it was the vacillating policy of the Government which had brought us into our present dfficulties. So far as the Port Arthur incident was concerned, he agreed with the hon. Member, but apart from that deplorable incident he believed the present situation had been arrived at by causes which were almost inevitable. According to the telegrams in that day's *Times*, the latest information from New York appeared to be that the State Department at Washington relied on the assurance that two new Manchurian ports would be opened to trade. That would prevent, or, at all events, retard the speedy "Russification" of China. If up at the centrally-situated town of Mukden a port was opened, the outside world would, at all events, have some hold on the trade of Manchuria. He did not know why we should not ourselves take as firm a line as the United States Government had done. He thought that in taking measures to meet the Russian advance in Asia we must be on our guard at every point: we must meet Russia at the North-East and South-West. He agreed completely with the three points stated by the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Berwick Division in his speech that day. There should be no expansion of territory, we should consolidate our frontiers, and preserve the open door. But he thought we must do something more than that. We must recognise in Asia as well as in Europe the principle of buffer States. Not only should we treat Afghanistan as a buffer State, but we should treat Persia as a buffer State, and also all those outlying dependencies which the Chinese called colonies, such as Eastern Turkestan, Mongolia, and Thibet. They read in the papers of all kinds of Russian expeditions, some scientific and some religious, to Thibet and Mongolia. We must do our best to help China to consolidate its rule over those parts of the world. During the past twelve months important events had happened in Persia. There had been two arrangements which, he supposed, were more or less accurately called commercial treaties. As far as he could make out, they took place about the same time—namely, February this year. A treaty in regard to the Customs Tariff was made with Russia not a long time before they heard of the treaty made by ourselves with Persia, which in point of fact was only made available to hon. Members this week. The results of the ingenuity of the Russians in the way in which they had arranged their tariff were becoming apparent. It was only the day before yesterday that the Foreign Office issued a Paper containing a Report on the Trade of the Kerman consular district for the year 1902-03. His Majesty's Consul, Major P. Sykes, said—

> "On the other hand, a new tariff of imports and export duties has been introduced, the net result of which is to make articles such as tea, which is consumed by all but the very poorest classes, very expensive, the duty having been raised from 5 per cent. to 100 per cent., and it is feared that the effect of the new tariff on trade in South-East Persia will be most unfavourable."

This was one of the instances in which British import was penalised in the most appalling manner. The disadvantage at which British piece goods were placed as compared with Russian piece goods was more apparent to those who had studied the subject than it seemed to be from the figures. Perhaps his noble friend would be able to put a different complexion on the matter, but he could not help thinking that we had been outwitted or overreached in this matter of commercial treaties and commercial arrangements with Persia. He pointed out that the Treaty recently made between this country and Persia was in French and Persian, while that which was made in 1857 was in French and English. East of Suez English was used, and not French. If he remembered rightly, the Treaty of Shimonoseki, made between Japan and China after the war, made its English text the official text. He could not but think that, in that part of the world where such details carried weight, it would be believed we were going down hill when the Treaty was not signed in our own language. He wished to say a few words about the Consular Service.

* THE CHAIRMAN: Order, Order; there is a special Vote for the Consular Service.

MR. BRYCE said that before the noble Lord answered the long indictment brought forward by the hon. Member for Barnsley with such a wealth of knowledge, he desired to put two questions in regard to two widely separated topics. The first had been suggested by a very interesting report which had been submitted to Parliament on slavery and free labour in the East African Protectorate. He would not deal with the question of slavery, but would confine himself to one particular point of very considerable importance suggested by that report. The House would remember that some time ago it was suggested that native labour should be recruited in Nyassaland and the East African Protectorate, but not to the extent of more than 1,000.

* LORD CRANBORNE: To begin with.

MR. BRYCE said that the House was to be informed before any more than 1,000 were recruited, and he hoped that that undertaking would be strictly adhered to. The Committee would remember that very serious representations had been made by the missionaries as to the danger of taking natives from that part of Africa and sending them to the Transvaal. The report he had referred to was very interesting, and gave a very lively idea of the social position of the tribes in East Africa, and was worthy of that very able and distinguished public servant, Sir Charles Elliott, our resident at Zanzibar. The report was entirely unfavourable to the recruiting of native labour in these territories for the mines in South Africa.

* LORD CRANBORNE: No natives are recruited in East Africa. The arrangement which was made had reference to British Central Africa.

MR. BRYCE: Are none going to be recruited from East Africa? My task will be shortened if the noble Lord can assure me of that.

* LORD CRANBORNE: "Never" is a long word, but there is no present intention of recruiting in East Africa.

MR. BRYCE said he would take it from the answer of the noble Lord that no recruiting was going on in East Africa, and that no recruiting would be begun without ample notice. He would regard that as an undertaking by the noble Lord.

* LORD CRANBORNE: Very good.

MR. BRYCE said that anyone who read the Report referred to would find that all the labour was wanted in that territory for itself, that it would be no benefit to the natives of East Africa to send them to the Transvaal, and that therefore the very strongest case would require to be made out before recruiting there was allowed. The other subject on which he desired to have some information was as to what was passing in the South-East of Europe, and what was the policy of the Government in relation thereto. Although this question had not been much before the House it was of very great importance. There were elements of danger in South-East Europe which might at any time involve these countries in still greater miseries than they suffered from at present, and which might take the dimensions of a European war. We had been very ignorant of what had been really going on in Macedonia, Bulgaria and Albania, the papers last presented not bringing the story down to the events of the last four or five months, and the information in the newspapers being scattered and contradictory, and often obviously biassed and tinged by the sources from which it came, or through which it passed, so that little confidence could be put in it. The promise of Turkish reforms, which has been so promptly accepted by Russia and Austria, were dead before they were born. No serious attempt had been made to put them in force, and they never would be put in force. Indeed, there had been such a carnival of bloodshed and strife throughout these countries during the last four or five months, that it would be impossible to apply any reforms whatever. Through the darkness of these intermittent conflicts and bloodshed there had been a possibility of a general massacre of the Christian population by the Turkish troops, and more than once the possibility of a war between Turkey and Bulgaria had been threatened. The danger of the invasion of Bulgaria by Turkey seemed to have passed away, and he hoped that it would not again arise. He was told that the disorders in these countries would likely recommence after the harvest was gathered, or at any rate in the spring. Some active steps would have to be taken on the part of Europe to bring about a solution of this serious question in the South-East of Europe. As the Committee knew, the policy of Austria and Russia, in accord, had been directed to secure the maintenance of the *status quo*, together with an amelioration of the condition of the people in the Turkish provinces. It might be said that the interest of Great Britain in those regions was a very secondary consideration. No doubt that was so when compared with the interest of Russia and Austria. But it was a real interest all the same. It was a commercial interest. These countries were once rich and prosperous, with a large trade, and they might become so again with absolute peace and good government. Besides that, we had the interest which belonged to us in common with the other Great Powers in the final settlement of the political control in these regions, and of the Dardanelles; and we had taken a special responsibility by the Treaty of Berlin. The 26th Article of the Treaty of Berlin expressly provided for the introduction of reforms in Macedonia. A scheme of these reforms was drawn up at that time by the representative of this country, but from that day to this no step had been taken to carry out that scheme. That imposed a duty on this country which we could not ignore. When we refused to accept the Treaty of San Stefano, and participated in that of Berlin, we undertook a serious responsibility to these countries, and their present terrible condition was due to the fact that the Powers had never put in force the Treaty of Berlin. It was quite clear that a case might arise in the near future in which the interest of Great Britain might become a very important factor. Suppose there was a question of endeavouring to prevent the Sultan of Turkey from declaring war against Bulgaria, and to induce him to really carry out reforms, the influence of Great Britain and France as disinterested Powers ought to be very great. He was sure the Committee would like to be told that His Majesty's Government would exert all the pressure they could to induce the Sultan to maintain the peace and introduce whatever reforms were possible. It had been suggested that Bulgaria should absorb Macedonia, and it had also been suggested that Macedonia should be created into an autonomous State. One or other of these possible solutions of the question might become practical shortly, and they would like to know the position which the Government would take in the matter, and the part which they would play in bringing about a permanent settlement. These were questions which did not become easier as time pressed. Nothing was to be gained by letting them hang over as had been done in the past twenty years. Happily, Russia and Austria seemed to be in accord, and if England and France could induce these two Powers to bring pressure on the Sultan, and give Macedonia a chance of peace and prosperity, no better use of British influence could be imagined. The questions, therefore, that he desired to ask were: When were they to have any papers relating to the state of affairs in Macedonia, and what was the view the Government took of the present condition of things in Macedonia, and what their hopes were as to peace being preserved between Turkey and Bulgaria?

*LORD CRANBORNE said that the right hon. Gentleman had asked whether the Government proposed to lay further Papers before the House in respect of the Macedonian question. He had thought that they had already laid a very large assortment of Papers before Parliament; but if the right hon. Gentleman believed that there was anything new that the Government could communicate to the House, he need not say that he should make it his business to prepare another Blue-book. [MR. BRYCE said that the last Blue-book only brought down information to February or March.] One of the characteristics of the politics of Southern Europe was a melancholy monotony. There was really nothing specially fresh on the Macedonian question. He was asked what prospect there was in respect of reforms. He had a note from one of our Consuls in Macedonia which stated that the Moslems no longer maintained the rather insolent demeanour which they used to have towards Bulgarians and other Christians, and a large number of the more refractory among them had been exiled. A Norwegian and a Swedish officer had arrived in order to instruct the gendarmes. That was one of the Russian schemes of reform. The right hon. Gentleman might say that that information did not carry us very much farther. The political situation was certainly very bad, but in some respects it was improving. The other day there was a change in the Bulgarian Government, and the new Government adopted the policy of trying to bring about a solution of the difficulties by amicable relations with the Porte. He did not think that these negotiations came to very much. There was some unfortunate frontier incidents. It was said that the Turks were massing troops on the Bulgarian frontier, and the Bulgarian Government were very much concerned, and informed the Powers of the obligation they were placed under to increase their provision for defence. He thought the reports were very much exaggerated. In consequence mainly of strong representations by Austria and Russia to the Porte, the Turkish Government gave orders that the troops at particular places on the frontier should be withdrawn. But still the difficulty undoubtedly remained. There was a very large force of Turkish troops under arms, and although the regulars were well controlled, there was no doubt that the presence of large bodies of armed men, irregulars, constituted a very menacing fact which could not be ignored. On the other hand there was no doubt that the

Revolutionary Association had not abandoned their propaganda, and that the Mohammedan population had been infuriated by the methods which the revolutionary bands had adopted. These methods restrained all sympathy which Europe might otherwise have given them. Dynamite, murder, outrage, were methods of achieving their emancipation, with which civilized Europe could have no sympathy.

MR. BRYCE: What is to be said about the unhappy people who are not concerned with the revolutionary band?

*LORD CRANBORNE said he agreed that their case was very sad, but unfortunately we had to take things as we found them. He would be sorry if the Committee carried away the idea that the Government were doing nothing. To Austria and Russia belongs the principal duty of intervention, and as the right hon. Gentleman had very properly said, although we had a real interest, it was a secondary interest. The right hon. Gentleman had quoted the Treaty of Berlin, but he ventured to remind him that the logical obligations which that Treaty involved were not only on Great Britain but on the other Powers as well. We could not consent to discharge our obligations under that Treaty apart from the co-signatory allies. There was nothing more to be regretted than the suspicion which seemed to grow up among the Turks that England was not their friend. England was the friend of Turkey in the best sense of the word. They had never scrupled to tell them how they had succeeded, and were succeeding more every day, in estranging all possible sympathy, and they had urged them again and again to try and recognise how the sands were running out and how the policy they were pursuing must end disastrously. They could do no more.

The hon. Member for Barnsley had asked him a large number of questions in regard to Persia and China. He could assure the hon. Gentleman that they were not neglecting British interests in Persia. They fully recognised that the Russian quarantine cordon on the Afghan border was a matter, interfering as it did with British trade from India, of which they had every right to complain, and they had not neglected making representations in the proper quarter in order to have that grievance abated. He did not think the hon. Gentleman need conclude so confidently that the Persian Government were rigidly bound in the matter of their finance not to borrow from any other country except Russia. He would urge him to take a more cheerful view of the situation, and not always to dwell on the minor key. He hoped the next time the hon. Gentleman went to Persia, which he supposed would be pretty soon, he would find that the position of this country was not only not bad, but that it was really gaining ground every day. As to the Persian Treaty, according to precedent the Persian plenipotentiary signed the text he understood, not the text he did not understand. The reason why it was written in French was because it was more expeditious and convenient. Monsieur Nans was more at home in the French language, and Sir Arthur Hardinge, who was an accomplished linguist, was perfectly at home in it; and, therefore, it was agreed that the text should be in French. He found that an important convention between Great Britain and Russia in 1885, a protocol between Great Britain and Austria in 1881, and a convention between Great Britain and Portugal in 1885 were all in French; and therefore the Committee would see that the Government did not involve themselves in any great revolution in having the text of the Persian Treaty in French. He thought hon. Gentlemen would agree that the Treaty was a great improvement on that that went before it. It reflected no small credit on Sir Arthur Hardinge, and showed that there was sufficient British influence at Teheran to induce the Persian Government to sign the Treaty which he had the honour of submitting to Parliament. Undoubtedly in respect of tea there was a great enhancement of the duty, but he had never heard that that would have any differential effect. He did not think the raising of the duty would place them in a worse position in regard to any competitors in the matter of tea than they were before. The idea, too, that British cotton piece goods were in any way placed at a disadvantage in consequence of the Russian Treaty was a mistake. He could assure the Committee that for the future there would be no possibility of duties being raised to the disadvantage of this country without our consent. That was a matter of no small credit to the Government, and more particularly to Sir Arthur Hardinge, who carried it out with conspicuous success. With regard to China, the figures which he possessed did not bear out the view that our trade with China was in a bad state. The volume of trade between Great Britain, the British possessions, the British colonies, and China was enhanced by over a million between 1901 and 1902. British trade was two-thirds of the whole of the trade with China, and was increasing. He did not wish to deceive the Committee. He frankly admitted that the figures he had given included returns from Hong-Kong, and that it was possible that certain deductions would have to be made. There was no reason for thinking that we had been worsted in competition in regard to railways in China. The Northern Railway of China was perhaps the most important line in the whole Empire, and was entirely in British hands. They had also made it perfectly clear within the last few months that they had the right to make the branches of the line when they were required. There was no reason to suppose that Great Britain would not be able to secure their full share of the railway development in the Yang-tsze region.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE asked whether it was correct that they were unable to secure the only railway which they seemed to care about, which was the line opposite Nanking.

*LORD CRANBORNE said the negotiations were proceeding. He should not say they were unable to secure the line. With regard to the Chinese indemnity, the British Government had always maintained that it was a gold debt, but owing to the fall in the value of silver, the Chinese Government were placed in a difficulty, and the British Government had allowed them to postpone the payment of the full gold value of the debt for ten years. They were willing to receive it as if it were a silver debt for ten years, after which, of course, there would be certain arrears to be paid. The Government fully recognised what was of importance to this country in Manchuria. On the other hand, they fully realised the special position which Russia had acquired. He thought the Russian Government knew perfectly well that we should be delighted to come to an agreement, but there were considerable difficulties. The right hon. Baronet described Russia as a glacier, and he thought the right hon. Gentleman would admit that there was considerable difficulty in negotiating with a glacier. The truth was he was driven to doubt whether the Russian Government was as homogeneous as *à priori* one would expect a despotism to be. On the contrary, there seemed to be at least two Parties in the Russian Government with whom they had to deal. The first requisite was that there should be willingness on the part of the Russian Government to make an agreement with us; and the second was that we should clearly understand what the Russian Government wanted. They had never been able to understand that. Sometime there was a fitful glimmer of light, but it had been of a wholly illusory nature. They had never received from the Russian Government an intimation of what they would expect, and of what they thought the British Government could reasonably be asked to assent to. Undoubtedly the result had been that Manchuria had not been evacuated yet. He did not deny that that was a very unsatisfactory situation, and he thought our ally, the Empire of Japan, was undoubtedly uneasy at the prolongation of that occupation. The United States Government, too, were anxious for some kind of settlement in Manchuria, their interests being mainly commercial. For Japan the principal question was the position of their interests in Korea. For this country and the United States it was the maintenance of our treaty rights, and particularly of the open door. There certainly were the elements out of which an agreement ought to be possible, and he could assure the Committee that, if the Russian Government was prepared to give due weight to our undoubted treaty rights and commercial interests, they would not find us *intransigeant* in the matter. As to the position of the Customs revenue at Niuchwang, it was paid into the Russian Bank to the credit of the Imperial Maritime Customs, and as long as the Russians remained in occupation at Niuchwang, that did not appear to be an unreasonable arrangement. They had no reason to suppose that when the Imperial Maritime Customs entered into their inheritance they would not find the full account of the money.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE (Carnarvon Burghs) said he should like to ask a few questions about Somaliland. He should like to know what had become of the Mullah. The last they had heard of him was that the Government had got him out of Mugdug; and the other day it was announced that they had captured his mother-in-law. Instead of being called the Somaliland Relief Expedition it should be called the Mullah Relief Expedition. He wished to know what the Government now proposed to do. They had a great faculty for blundering; but they never profited by those blunders. He saw telegrams appearing in the papers to the effect that the Mullah's forces were dispersed, that his friends were deserting him, and that if another expedition were sent out, it would smash him up completely. These telegrams were manufactured on the spot by persons who were interested in having another expedition. He wished to ask whether the Government were about to send out another foolish expedition. The last expedition considerably increased the prestige and power of the Mullah. The Secretary of State for War stated that the force had been increased by 300 men. Doubtless, the right hon. Gentleman thought that was an enormous increase, equivalent to three of his Army Corps.

*THE CHAIRMAN: I do not think the hon. Gentleman would be entitled on this Vote to discuss the military arrangements in Somaliland. There is a special Vote for Somaliland, and the military operations are now undertaken by the War Office. The hon. Gentleman would, however, be entitled to raise any question as to future policy.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE said that that was his intention. The Foreign Office was responsible for the policy to be adopted; and what he wanted to know was whether the Foreign Office really meant to have another expedition into the desert or not; and whether they would be tempted by the information which was being sedulously disseminated with a view to luring on the Foreign Office and other innocent Departments to another expedition. He observed that Abyssinia was disgusted with the British arrangements. The Abyssinian forces were to be met with at certain points, but the British forces did not turn up. He should like to know what the arrangements in Abyssinia were; and whether, if any arrangements were made in Abyssinia and Italy, they were carried out. He saw it stated that the result of British action in Somaliland had been to foment disturbance in the Soudan, and to create a sort of feeling that the power of the British was not what it was. That showed the folly of the operations of the Foreign Office. He was certain that if a Liberal Government had blundered as egregiously and as often as the present Government had, it would have been denounced throughout the length and breadth of the land. The action of the Government was worse than anything that happened in connection with the Gordon business. With regard to the Persian Treaty the noble Lord stated that an assurance had been given that it did not refer to preferential treatment as between the colonies and the mother country. On the face of it, the treaty did not bear that interpretation. When did the noble Lord receive that assurance? Who gave it? Was it given verbally, or was it communicated in a document in the possession of the Foreign Office? If there was such a document, why was the House not placed in possession of it? With regard to the German Papers, he would call the attention of the Committee to the fact that all the Papers had not been laid before them. The Government had been asked for the documents showing the Canadian part of the negotiations, and the Colonial Secretary had replied that he was not aware of any such documents. As a matter of fact they were letters from the Canadian Government to the Foreign Office.

*LORD CRANBORNE: That is certainly not true, because the Canadian Government does not correspond with the Foreign Office. [A laugh.]

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: That laugh is premature. I have the letter in my possession. It was communicated to the Foreign Office, and the Foreign Office communicated it to the German Government.

*LORD CRANBORNE: The hon. Gentleman said the letter was from the Canadian Government to the Foreign Office. I suppose the hon. Member means a letter to the Colonial Office communicated to the Foreign Office.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE said that was a mere quibble. The letter was used by the Foreign Office and communicated to the German Government. It did not matter by what Department it was sent; it was used by the Foreign Office. It was a letter of the greatest importance. It was written on July 11, 1898, and communicated to the Foreign Office in the same month. It was important to know whether Canada had ever asked us to retaliate on Germany. Was there a single letter from Canada which made that request? Not one. All the letter he was referring to did was to ask the Foreign Office to make representations on the subject to Germany. The letter was written in July, and although it was of such importance that the Colonial Secretary based on it his proposal to reverse the fiscal policy of this country for sixty years, the Foreign Office took no notice of it till September 10—months after it was written. And they, the Foreign Office, simply enclosed a copy of the letter to our Ambassador and asked him to communicate the substance of it to the German Government and to ask for an explanation. The German Government gave their explanation and the Foreign Office practically accepted it. It further appeared from Papers presented to the Canadian Parliament that negotiations had been carried on, not merely by the Foreign Office, but between the Canadian Government and the German Foreign Office. They had been carried on at Montreal. He wanted to know how it was that the documents which had been published in the Canadian Parliament had been withheld from this House. Those documents showed that Germany appealed to Canada, and said:

> "The treaty arrangements are coming to an end in 1903. Leave the matter till then. Then we will negotiate a fresh treaty with you."

It was not a question of retaliation. It was a question of allowing existing treaties to run out and then entering into negotiations for a fresh treaty. That was an entirely different state of affairs to that which had been represented. The idea given to the country was that Germany was punishing Canada because Canada had given us a certain preference, and that we could stand it no longer. That was not the case at all, as the documents presented to the Canadian Parliament showed. It was treating the House and the country very unfairly not to produce the documents in which Canada herself pointed out the state of her trade with Germany. Germany was selling five times as much to Canada as she was buying from her. Germany took of the produce of Canada to the value of 1,300,000 dollars; Canada bought from Germany in 1902 nearly 11,000,000 dollars worth of goods. What need was there for protecting Canada in a case of that kind? Canada had got Germany entirely in her own hands. If Germany chose to stop trade with Canada she would lose at least 9,000,000 dollars. When an important question of policy of this character was discussed, which might inconvenience the whole of British trade, it was not the way to prosecute an inquiry to conceal a part of the truth by not giving information most vital to the consideration of the matter. Canada could retaliate; this country could not. We profited by German trade when we took shipping into account. The suggestion was that we should take the quarrel in hand and throw over German trade, whereas Canada could retaliate with ten times the effect that we could produce. Canada had never asked us to retaliate. She had never asked us to do anything but make representations.

Finally, he wished to ask the noble Lord whether he was going to let Parliament see the documents which gave the assurance as to the interpretation of the Persian treaty, and whether they could see the Papers concerning the negotiations between Germany and Canada that had been given in Canada and had been withheld from this country.

MR. REGINALD LUCAS (Portsmouth) said he wished to obtain from the Government a statement of what they intended to do in regard to railway construction in the neighbourhood of the Persian Gulf. The position, as he understood it was this: We had long enjoyed, and still enjoyed, a dominant position in the Persian Gulf, but our position was not guaranteed to us. We had won it by prestige and kept it by prestige. The country was primitive in its methods, and sooner or later it must be developed, if not by ourselves, then by some other country. They knew the jealousy which existed in this in regard to any enterprise on the part of Germany. But if we do not undertake the development of this country around the Persian Gulf it would be done by somebody else. It was impossible for us to take up the position of a dog-in-the-manger. He believed it would be a very important matter that we should look well ahead so that the development of this country should be undertaken by us. If we do not take a long view we shall find ourselves in the position of trying to lock the door after the horse was stolen. He would like his noble friend to tell the House what view the Foreign Office took of the situation, and to suggest to the Committee that it was one which should not be overlooked.

*MR. EMMOTT (Oldham) said it was inevitable, natural, proper, and right that in a discussion on the Foreign Office Vote hon. Members should survey mankind from China to Peru, but he wanted to bring the debate back to the negotiations with Germany about Canada. When the Prime Minister was speaking that afternoon he interrupted the right hon. Gentleman by asking how long the Government had held their present opinions on that subject. He wished to assure the right hon. Gentleman that he had not intended to be discourteous, for all of them held him in great respect and affection, and undoubtedly the Leader of the Opposition very felicitously described that feeling when on the previous night he called him *l'enfant gâte* of the House of Commons. With regard to the main issues on fiscal policy the right hon. Gentleman had said he had formed no opinion at all. Clearly the Government had not realised the importance of this controversy between Germany and Canada for any length of time, for it had been shown that afternoon that the Colonial Secretary only last year described it as a minor matter of sentiment and a question of little practical importance. He stated that the Colonies had an effective remedy in their own hands. Had the fight with which they were now threatened been foreshadowed a year ago that would have been very fully discussed at the Colonial Conference. The Colonial Secretary on the 17th June spoke of the ingenuous ignorance of the right hon. Member for Berwickshire, who had asked if he knew of any hostile discrimination against the British colonies. The right hon. gentleman replied that he did know, and that the Government resented it. He did not object to the resentment, but he would like to lay stress on the fact that this so-called hostile discrimination was not new; it had existed since 1899, and the only difference since made was that Canada had levied a surtax on German food. Therefore the duty was rather against Germany, and not at all more against Canada than it was at that time. What did the Colonial Secretary say in 1899? Speaking at Leicester, on November 30th, he said—

"There is something more which I think any far-seeing English statesman must have long desired, and that is that we should not remain permanently isolated on the Continent of Europe . . . . It must have appeared evident to everybody that the natural alliance is between ourselves and the great German Empire. We have had, as I have said differences, but they have been about matters so petty as regards the merits of the particular case that they have not really formed occasion for anything like serious controversy. These differences have, under Lord Salisbury's wise administration of foreign affairs, been carefully removed, and at present I cannot conceive any point which may arise in the immediate future which would bring ourselves and the Germans into antagonism of any kind."

That speech was entirely inconsistent with the present attitude of the Colonial Secretary and the Government. The circumstances were practically the same; the only alteration was that Canada had put on this surtax. Not only was the hostile discrimination which then existed taken "lying down," but the Colonial Secretary fawned at the feet of those who were making the hostile discrimination, and begged for an alliance with them. He desired to make no attack on the Colonial Secretary, but certainly the right hon. Gentleman's treatment of this matter showed an incurable levity and changeability of purpose which were not worthy of the dignity of this nation. Four years ago he begged for an alliance; now we were to have an election cry of retaliation against foreign nations in general, but against Germany in particular. He protested against this question between Canada and Germany being made the cock-pit of a Party fight. There were matters of high policy involved, and it was surely to the interests of the nation that there should be continuity in matters of this kind, and that as far as possible both parties should pursue the same policy. Unless that were done England would certainly not keep the high position she had attained in the world. It was not statesmanship to have these sudden changes of policy put forward as they had been of late. The present proposals consisted of two policies which were mutually antagonistic — the policy of preferential tariffs, and the policy of retaliation, which was practically the protection of home manufactures. Speaking for himself, he considered the controversy with Canada a serious matter. Every effort ought to be used to prevent discrimination against our colonies because they gave us a preference. There was no need to talk of war in regard to the matter, but neither was there any need to beg alliances with those who were exercising the hostile discrimination. Statesmanship ought to solve the difficulty, and he hoped that statesmanship would solve it, for the last dispatch of Baron von Richthofen did show a desire to enter into negotiations on a particular important point, and the point brought out by the hon. Member for Carnarvon that the matter would be taken up again in 1903 tended in the same direction. At the same time, our own trade was a matter of enormous importance to us, and we could not lightly begin a war of tariffs. By such a course we should inevitably hurt ourselves. Circumstances were quite conceivable in which something would have to be done, but he hoped it would not be done as part of an election campaign. These matters should be treated not by sudden changes of opinion, announced by prominent statesmen, but by some carefully thought-out plan, which the nation could digest, and, if it thought it advisable, support.

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.) congratulated the Foreign Office on its firmness and resolution in withdrawing its Envoy from Servia after the murders which, in his opinion, formed one of the most disgraceful events in the history of Europe for over a century. The "spirited policy" which had been suggested with regard to China and Persia would entail two armies of 50,000 being in readiness for operations in Southern Russia and the Yang-tse Valley, and he was afraid the country was not anxious for the expenditure which such a scheme would involve. As to the fiscal question, everybody seemed to attack the Foreign Office because nothing was done between 1899 and 1902. To his mind the reason was clear. No sensible nation, while at war, would irritate another first-class Power if it could be avoided, and the Government were perfectly right in allowing the matter to sleep until after the conclusion of the South African war. As to the matter of the Benedictine monks, he hoped the Foreign Office would be supplied with a list of the confiscated property. As far as he could make out, there was a grant of £400 a year, in addition to which there was £1,100 a year given through the Bishops. It was not known whether the latter was confiscated or not. Then there were certain houses, the country house and a number of acres of land belonging to the old boys of the school, and the property of Mr. Ward. The speech of the Under-Secretary was very sympathetic, and he hoped the noble Lord would do his best in the matter, and that he would receive some support from French public opinion.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.), hoped the members of this Order would take the advice of the Under-Secretary of State and furnish the Foreign Office with a full and detailed list of the property which had been confiscated, and also that they would ascertain in the French Courts whether the property was rightly or wrongly taken from them. It would, however, be rather a hardship on the members of the community to adopt that procedure, as they were by no means wealthy, but he believed it was the proper course for them to take if they desired to establish a good case for intervention.

MR. BRIGG (Yorkshire, W.R., Keighley) said he wished to impress upon the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs the necessity of encouraging the production of cotton in the Soudan. This was a subject in which the noble Lord had already taken some steps. It was well known that there was a short supply of cotton in Lancashire, and what he wished to point out was the immediate necessity of constructing the railway from Berber to Suakin which was necessary in order to promote the production of cotton in the Soudan. The cotton produced in the Soudan was very valuable, and was largely used in the manufacture of other textile fabrics. He trusted the railway he had alluded to would be pushed on, because in the Soudan, which was under British influence, there were over a million acres of very suitable land for cotton growing, and he had good information to show that cotton could be grown there to a very large extent.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) said the hon. Member for the Carnarvon Boroughs had brought a very important matter before the House, namely, that they had been practically deceived by what had gone on between Canada and the Foreign Office. They were told by the Colonial Secretary that he had received no information upon the matter. The hon. Member for Longford stated that papers on this subject had been laid before the Canadian Parliament and that there had been a debate upon this question. His hon. friend the Member for the Carnarvon Boroughs gave an account of what took place in the Canadian Parliament, and he stated that a letter had been sent from the Canadian Government to the Colonial Office, which was sent on to the Foreign Office, and the Foreign Office had made that letter the basis of a communication to Germany. The Canadian Government did not demand retaliation from us, but they urged the German Government to take some friendly action in the matter, and the German Government replied that they would be very happy to do so in 1903. That threw an entirely different complexion upon the whole matter. He thought the noble Lord ought to give them some assurance that they were going to have those papers. The Cabinet Committee of Inquiry might have had these papers, but the House of Commons had not had them, and he thought they were being most unfairly treated. He hoped the Colonial Secretary would promise to let them have those papers, otherwise they would have take very strong steps to get them.

*LORD CRANBORNE said he did not think the hon. Member who had just sat down was justified in the kind of language he had used, for he declared that the House of Commons had been deceived upon this matter.

MR. LABOUCHERE: Hear, hear.

*LORD CRANBORNE said the complaint was that there was a certain letter which had been made a secret of. He did not believe the hon. Member could have read the Blue Book, because if he had done so he would have seen on page 22 that the letter was referred to there. Therefore the accusation he made that the Government were keeping something secret, had no foundation. If they had desired to keep it secret they would not have mentioned it in that dispatch.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE said there were other documents, and the noble Lord was not treating the Committee fairly.

*LORD CRANBORNE said he would deal with the other document later on. As to the letter from the High Commissioner of Canada, of which the hon. Member pretended that such a great secret had been made, it was sent to the Colonial Office, was handed to the Foreign Office, and then formed the subject of a communication to the Ambassador at Berlin. It was not made the basis of a representation to the German Government. Then it was alleged that there were certain conversations between the Canadian Minister and the German Consul-General, and that the account of those conversations was communicated in documentary form to the Canadian Parliament.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE said that was not exactly the case, because the document was communicated to the German representative. It was not merely communicated to the Canadian Parliament, but presented by the Canadian Minister to the German representative, and afterwards to the Canadian Parliament.

*LORD CRANBORNE said it was his business to reply for the Foreign Office. He had not seen this document, and neither had the Colonial Secretary. Therefore no charge could be brought against the Government as to the laying of a document on the Table of the House which they had not yet seen. He resented the accusation of the hon. Member for Northampton, and suggested that a question should be addressed to the Colonial Secretary. The subject did not concern the Foreign Office. It belonged to the Colonial Office, and the hon. Member might put a Question on the Paper about it, instead of making accusations of deceit across the floor of the House.

MR. BRYCE asked whether the noble Lord could not give an undertaking that the documents would be presented to the House, especially as they had been presented to the Canadian Parliament.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE said those documents referred to the Foreign Office.

MR. BLACK (Banffshire) said that a Question had been addressed to the Colonial Secretary at the beginning of the week, and the right hon. Gentleman had denied the existence of any such document or letter.

*LORD CRANBORNE suggested that another question should be framed and addressed to his right hon. friend. He could not, however, give an undertaking as to a subject which did not concern his Department. There was no desire whatever to deceive the House, and he should be glad to give all the information in his power. He agreed as to the importance of the Suakin and Berber Railway and the encouragement of cotton-growing in Egypt. He assured the hon. Member that Lord Cromer and the Egyptian Government were keenly interested in the promotion of this railway, and no stone would be left unturned to push it forward without any unnecessary delay so far as the finances would permit. The hon. Member for Portsmouth had asked some questions about railways in Persia. The Persian Government were under an obligation not to build railways anywhere, and the British Government held a pledge that when railways were constructed in the north of Persia they had a right to construct corresponding railways in the south by means of British capital. There was no question of railway construction by British capital in Turkish territory. Something was said about a fresh expedition in Somaliland. The present expedition had not come to an end. As regarded the prospects of the next phase in the campaign, that was a question which concerned more the Secretary of State for War. There was one matter which did belong to the Foreign Office, and that was the position of our relations with Abyssinia. The hon. Member opposite said he had private information.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE said he did not say private information, because it was information which had appeared in the Press.

*Lord CRANBORNE said there had been no friction between the Abyssinians and this country, and the Government were working in complete harmony with Italy and were in constant communication with the Italian Government with reference to these operations. A large part of the area affected was within the Italian sphere, but there was no friction between them at all.

Sir EDWARD GREY said the noble Lord was technically quite right in saying that the question with reference to the Canadian Papers which had been laid before the Canadian Parliament ought to be addressed to the Colonial Secretary, but the Foreign Office was responsible for presenting the papers which were in their possession. They knew in laying those papers that something had occurred

between the Canadian Government and the German Consul in Canada, and it ought to have occurred to them that the story they were laying before Parliament was likely not to be complete without a reference to what had passed in Canada. The noble Lord said he did not know what it was, and the Colonial Secretary did not know, but it should have occurred to them to find out whether what had passed was important, and whether it was required or not to complete the case which was going to be presented to Parliament. The Foreign Office having been responsible for presenting the case were bound to lay them before Parliament, and they ought to have a definite promise that these papers would be laid before the House as soon as possible.

*Sir CHARLES DILKE said that perhaps it would be most convenient if he withdrew the Motion he had made.

Motion, by leave, withdrawn.

And it being Midnight, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon Monday next.

PATENT OFFICE EXTENSION [EXPENSES].

Resolution reported.

"That it is expedient to authorise the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of all expenses incurred by the Commissioners of Works under any Act of the present session for the acquisition of land for the further extension of the Patent Office, and for purposes connected therewith."

Resolution agreed to.

Adjourned at five minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Friday, 24th July, 1903.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROVISIONAL ORDERS (No. 5) BILL.

The CHAIRMAN of COMMITTEES informed the House that the opposition to the Bill was withdrawn: The Order made on Friday last discharged, and Bill committed to a Committee of the Whole House.

Strabane and Letterkenny Railway Bill. Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Lord Braye be proposed to the House as a member of the Select Committee on the said Bill in the place of the Lord Lawrence; read, and agreed to.

North Metropolitan Electric Power Supply Bill [H.L.]. Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Five Lords appointed a Committee on the Strabane and Letterkenny Railway Bill do form the Select Committee for the consideration of the North Metropolitan Electric Power Supply Bill; read, and agreed to; all Petitions referred to the Committee, with leave to the petitioners praying to be heard by counsel against the Bill to be heard as desired, as also counsel for the Bill.

North Metropolitan Electric Power Supply Bill [H.L.]. Report from the Committee of Selection, That Lord Sherborne be proposed to the House as a member of the Select Committee on the said Bill in the place of the Lord Kinnaird; read and agreed to.

Alexandra Park and Palace Bill. Reported, without Amendment.

Hastings Harbour Bill [H.L.]. The King's Consent signified; and Bill reported, with Amendments.

Neath, Pontardawe, and Brynaman Railway Bill. Read 3ª, with the Amendments; further Amendments made; Bill passed, and returned to the Commons.

Mullingar, Kells, and Drogheda Railway Bill; Great Western Railway Bill; Lancashire and Yorkshire and London and North-Western Railways (Steam Vessels) Bill. Read 3ª, with the Amendments, and passed, and returned to the Commons.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

TRADE REPORTS: ANNUAL SERIES.

No. 3038. Russia (Poland and Lithuania).

No. 3039. Mexico (Vera Cruz).

No. 3040. Norway.

No. 3041. Sweden (Gothenburg).

BRITISH SOUTH AFRICA COMPANY.

Estimates for 1902-1903 and 1903-1904 (in continuation of [Cd. 1363], November, 1902).

MERCHANT SHIPPING (LOSS OF LIFE).

Return showing the lives lost by wreck, drowning, or other accident in British merchant ships registered in the United Kingdom during the years 1891 to 1902 inclusive (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper [Cd. 1253.]).

Presented (by Command) and ordered to lie on the Table.

FISCAL POLICY.

*LORD AVEBURY: My Lords, I rise to ask the noble Duke the Lord President of the Council whether the inquiry on which His Majesty's Government are engaged is confined to the effect of modifications of the tariff of the United Kingdom only; or whether information will be laid upon the Table as to the views of the self-governing colonies; and what modifications, if any, they are prepared to make in their own fiscal policy. The great problem now before the nation is partly fiscal and partly political. There are some who, while regretting on fiscal grounds any change in our system, are ready to consider any wishes expressed by the colonies in a friendly spirit, and who may be willing to make some concession of their economical convictions if by doing so they can satisfy themselves that the colonies can be induced, not, indeed, to erect additional barriers against foreign countries, but to make some substantial progress in the direction of free, or, at any rate, freer trade with the mother country. Is the preference to be given by lowering the duties on our manufactures, and if so, at what are they to stand, or are the duties to remain at the present rate on our produce and to be raised as against foreigners? The effect in the two cases will be, of course, very different, and if the latter course were adopted the benefit to our trade would be very slight. Again, what articles are to be affected? I take it for granted that there cannot be one *ad valorem* rate. Foreign gold, for instance, cannot be taxed. Though it may seem a contradiction in terms, we might be given preferential rates, and yet duties might be so imposed as to fall specially on British goods. For instance, Canada has given us a preference, and we recognise it gratefully; but her fiscal system presses with special severity on British goods, and even after the preference we pay a higher rate than other countries. The rate on British goods is, on an average, 18 per cent.; that on American goods only 12 per cent.; or, if we take dutiable articles only, the rates in both cases, after allowing for the 33 per cent., are 25 per cent. As to future changes, the statements in the Blue-book are not definite enough to enable us to estimate their probable effect. For instance, the Cape and Natal foreshadow a difference of 25 per cent., but suggest that this is to be arrived at, not by lowering duties on our produce, but by raising those on produce from foreign countries; Australia says, "preferential treatment not yet defined as to nature or extent;" New Zealand suggests a general preference of 10 per cent. either by reduction of the present duty or by raising that on foreign produce; Canada promises a further reduction, but does not say what. It is impossible to judge whether, and to what extent, if any, it would be wise of us to alter our present system without much more information on these points. I trust, therefore, that the noble Duke will be able to state that the facts to be laid before the country will include some information as to the desires and intentions of the self-governing colonies.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of LANSDOWNE): My Lords, in the absence of the noble Duke the Lord President of the Council, my noble friend will perhaps allow me to reply to his Question. It seems to me that some of the matters to which he referred in his speech were of a kind which it would be obviously impossible for your Lordships' House to discuss at the present moment. His object is to obtain from us an assurance that we shall take measures to make ourselves aware of the opinions of the self-governing colonies with regard to the question of tariff policy. I think it has been stated repeatedly and in speeches which have been delivered from this Bench, that the colonial aspects of the case will certainly be considered by His Majesty's Government. But it has been said also, and I think it was said last night by the noble Duke, that in our view it is necessary, in the first place, that we should, so to speak, clear our own minds, and ascertain, so far as the interests of this country are concerned, whether it is possible to make a change of the kind which has been under discussion; and that when that point has been disposed of the time will have arrived for approaching the self-governing colonies and ascertaining from them to what extent they are prepared, in exchange for anything we may have to offer to them, to give us preferential treatment which may be acceptable to us. We are at present engaged on the first branch of that investigation, and until it has been further advanced I do not see how it is possible for us to approach the second branch. The only other observation which it occurs to me to make is this. The noble Lord dwelt on the necessity of bearing in mind the political as well as the commercial aspects of this problem, and I entirely agree with him in that. To my mind, so far as the self-governing colonies are concerned, the political considerations which arise in connection with this question are fully as important as those considerations which are purely commercial or economic in character. That is all I can tell the noble Lord in reply to his Question. I see that the noble Duke is now in his place, and he may possibly desire to supplement what I have said.

THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH: As the noble Duke is now in his place I should like to call his attention to a pamphlet which has been sent to me by the Liberal Unionist Association, of which I see the noble Duke is chairman. I certainly understood, from what the noble Duke said last night, that not only had he not committed himself in favour of Mr. Chamberlain's proposals, but that no member of the Government, except the Colonial Secretary, was committed to them. The noble Duke is reported to have said last night—

> "I believe that if free trade has not done for us all that some of its authors expected that it would do, it is not very difficult to prove that any alternative proposal would not remedy the evils complained of, and might involve us in greater evils still."

From the language used by the noble Duke himself I think it fair to infer that he is at the present moment a free-trader; but in this paper, which contains a list of publications for and against the proposed changes, the noble Duke is stated to have delivered a speech in favour of the proposed changes. Lower down, however, the noble Duke appears as being against the proposed changes. In other words, the paper would appear to give the impression that the noble Duke had delivered two contradictory opinions on the subject. I desire to ask, therefore, whether this paper has his approval, and whether he is prepared to assume the responsibility which the paper attributes to him of supporting Mr. Chamberlain's proposals. It is very important that papers should not be circulated which will mislead the public as to the noble Duke's position.

THE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (The Duke of DEVONSHIRE): My Lords, I think it would be more convenient if Questions of this sort were asked after notice. But I am perfectly able and willing to answer this Question at once. The list of leaflets to which the noble Earl has referred has been published by the Liberal Unionist Association, of which, as the noble Earl states, I am chairman, and a certain number of them have been published with my knowledge. The noble Earl has evidently not taken the trouble to look at the leaflets themselves. If he had done so he would have seen that what is published, in what he referred to as the list of those in favour of Mr. Chamberlain's policy, represents the Duke of Devonshire as being in favour of inquiry. The extract is taken from a speech which I delivered in this House, and I can have no objection whatever to having a passage from my speech in favour of inquiry reproduced. It is not in the least, and does not profess to be, a paper in support of Mr. Chamberlain's proposals.

The subject then dropped.

LIGHT RAILWAYS BILL.

[SECOND READING].

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

LORD WOLVERTON: My Lords, it will be in the recollection of the House that when Parliament passed the Light Railways Act of 1896 it treated that measure more or less as of an experimental description, and confined its operations to the period of five years. Since the expiration of that period Parliament has renewed the Act year by year, and the object of the present Bill is to make it permanent, as the Board of Trade consider that it has been a success. To prove its success I will quote a few figures. Up to now the orders that have been applied for number 442, of which the Board of Trade have confirmed 194. These comprise a total length of line of over 4,000 miles, at an estimated expenditure of £31,550,000. To make the Act of 1896 permanent is the effect of Clause 1. Clauses 2 and 3 reform the procedure. Under the existing Act if the Board of Trade think a light railway scheme to be of such importance that it ought to be submitted to Parliament the preliminary work on the Order is wasted and the promoters have to begin *de novo.*

Clauses 2 and 3 remedy that state of things.

Moved, that the Bill be read 2^a.—(*Lord Wolverton.*)

THE CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES (The Earl of MORLEY): My Lords, I do not rise to offer the slightest opposition to this Bill. On the contrary, I think the measure is a very useful one. If promoters have to resort to a private Bill they should not be compelled to commence the whole proceedings *de novo.* There is no doubt that the existing legislation in regard to light railways and tramways is not in a very satisfactory condition, and I would appeal to the Board of Trade to consider before another session whether they should not introduce a more comprehensive measure which would bring some order into the law. The Tramways Act was passed in 1870, before there was any idea of electric tramways, and it deals with a set of circumstances entirely different from those that obtain to-day. As I pointed out when the Light Railways Act of 1896 was passed, there is nothing to differentiate a light railway from a tramway on the one hand or an ordinary railway on the other. The only difference is in procedure. In the case of tramways the consent of the local authorities and of Parliament has to be obtained in the ordinary way, whereas in the case of light railways the preliminary consent of the local authorities is not required, and the Orders are obtained from a body outside Parliament. I do not say that that is by any means a bad procedure. I only point out that it is possible for these schemes to be dealt with in two distinctly different ways, and it is not at all an uncommon proceeding, when it is found to be too late to comply with the necessary formalities connected with the promotion of a Private Tramway Bill, to substitute a Light Railway Bill, and that can be done without the consent of the local authority being required. I venture to hope that before another session the Board of Trade will consider what can be done to bring some order into this legislation.

Lord Wolverton.

On Question, Bill read 2^a, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Monday next.

MOTOR-CARS BILL [H.L.].

Amendments reported (according to Order).

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN said he had a personal explanation to make. About a week ago he quoted in that House from the *Standard* newspaper certain cases in which motor-car drivers had behaved in a manner which, certainly on the face of it, appeared to be anything but praiseworthy, and one of them was a case in which a lady had an accident near Sutton, which, it was stated, had been caused by a motor-car which had not stopped, but simply left her where she was. He had yesterday received a letter, dated 21st July, which said—

> "In your speech on Tuesday last you quoted a case of furious driving near Sutton. I live in Sutton, and am a member of Sutton District Council, and, being a motorist myself, I thought fit to have some inquiries made in regard to this accident. My wife saw the sister of the lady who was, according to the newspaper reports, the victim of a motor-car fiend, and ascertained from her own lips that the accident was not from a motor-car at all, but from her horse bolting by being frightened by a haymaking machine. There was no motor-car involved in the question at all."

Of course he was bound to read this to the House. It showed that in that particular case the *Standard* was misinformed.

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Lord BALFOUR of BURLEIGH): I am very glad that the noble Earl has had an opportunity of making that explanation. I will answer at this moment a Question which the noble Earl asked me yesterday as to the application to Scotland of the provision which makes the owner or other persons on a car liable under the Summary Jurisdiction Act, 1848, in common with the driver, for an offence under this Bill. I am informed by the Lord Advocate that the common law of Scotland will cover all the expressions in the Summary Jurisdiction Act, and I am also informed by the Irish Office that the provision will apply equally to Ireland.

LORD TWEEDMOUTH inquired whether the meetings which the noble Lord had promised to arrange between Lord Kelvin and the Local Government Board expert on the subject of the possibility of imposing a power limit had taken place.

LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH: The meeting that was arranged for has taken place. The Local Government Board expert has convinced Lord Kelvin of the impossibility of carrying out that noble Lord's suggestion, and my noble friend Lord Kelvin has authorised me to say that he intends to take no further action in the matter.

LORD BURGHCLERE moved an Amendment by which offences would be regarded as being committed by driving "without due care," rather than by driving "negligently." The adoption of his Amendment would strengthen the Bill, as it would bring an incompetent driver who was neither driving recklessly nor negligently within the scope of the Bill if he caused an accident.

Amendment moved—

"In Clause 1, page 1, line 7, to leave out the words 'or negligently' and to insert the words 'or without due care.'"—(*Lord Burghclere.*)

LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH: I have made special inquiry regarding the choice between these two expressions. I frankly admit that to the lay mind there is not very much difference between them, but I am assured that "negligently" is a word which is very usual in Acts of Parliament. It is perfectly understood in the legal sense, and there is less likely to be a difference of opinion about it than in the case of the expression, "without due care." If a man drives in a manner which is dangerous to the public he will come under the clause as it stands, and really that is all that it is necessary for us to provide for. I confess, speaking only for myself, that I have a great misgiving about the use of the word "due." I have never been able to make up my mind whether it strengthens or weakens the amount of care it is supposed to predicate. If I reply to a correspondent that I will pay "due" attention to his letter, it is an open question whether I wish to express any intention of paying a greater or a less amount of attention to it. I do not much like the word, and I am advised by those who are more competent than myself to express an opinion on this matter that "negligently" is the better word.

THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH suggested the insertion, after the words "or negligently," of the words "or without care," leaving out the word "due." He thought the clause would be strengthened in the right direction by the insertion of these words.

LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH: I do not think I can add anything to what I have already said on this point.

Amendment, by leave of the House, withdrawn.

LORD BRAYE referred to the large number of accidents caused by motorists failing to give the necessary warning when turning corners. He thought that a provision on this subject should be inserted in the Bill rather than be left to the regulations to be subsequently made by the Local Government Board, and he hoped the noble Lord would accept his Amendment.

Amendment moved—

"In Clause 1, page 1, line 11, after the word 'roadway' to insert the words 'or shall, when about to cross a spot where two or more streets or thoroughfares meet, fail to sound the motor horn if driving a car propelled by steam or by petrol, or fail to ring the bell if driving a car propelled by electricity.'"—(*Lord Braye.*)

LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH: Under the Statute as it stands, which will not be altered by this Bill, every motor-car must carry a bell or other instrument capable of giving sufficient warning of the approach of the car to any point of danger. To my mind this is a matter which is much better dealt with by regulation, and I hope the noble Lord will not press his Amendment.

Amendment, by leave of the House, withdrawn.

LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH: The Amendment standing in my name is one which I do not think the House will have any difficulty in agreeing to. It is suggested by the County Councils Association, and the object is to prevent fraud in the use of registration and identification marks. I think this is an offence which will not often be committed, but we ought to have the right to punish it when it is committed, because it clearly partakes of the nature of fraud.

Amendment moved—

"In page 3, after Clause 3, to insert as a new clause. If any person forges or fraudulently alters or uses, or fraudulently lends or allows to be used by any other person, any mark for identifying a car or any licence under this Act he shall be guilty of an offence under this Act.'"—(*Lord Balfour of Burleigh.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

*EARL RUSSELL moved to delete the words "motor-car" from Clause 4 and to insert the word "vehicle." Clause 4 provided that a person driving a motor-car should, in any case, if an accident occurred to any person, or his horse or vehicle, owing to the presence of the motor-car on the road, stop, and if required, give his name and address, and also the name and address of the owner of the car; and if any person acted in contravention of this section, he was made liable for each offence, on summary conviction, to a fine not exceeding £10. He ventured to think that this offence should be punished equally if committed by the driver of a horse vehicle. Surely what was sauce for the motor-car goose should also be sauce for the horse traffic gander. In support of his Amendment the noble Earl mentioned an instance where a car belonging to himself, which was quite stationary by the side of the road, was run into by two partially intoxicated persons in a light gig, who did £8 worth of damage to the car and when asked for their names and addresses drove off and escaped all responsibility for their action.

Amendments moved—

"In Clause 4, page 3, line 28, to leave out the words 'motor-car' and to insert the word 'vehicle'; in line 30, to leave out the words 'motor-car' and to insert the word 'vehicle'; and in line 32, to leave out the word 'car' and to insert the word 'vehicle.'"—*Earl Russell.*

LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH: I am afraid I cannot accept this Amendment. I shall not go into the merits of it, although I join with the noble Earl in condemnation of the action of the driver of the vehicle to which he referred. But I would remind the noble Earl that we are engaged in amending the Light Locomotives Act and not the Highways Act. It would be beyond the scope of this measure to amend the Highways Act, and such a course would be legitimately objected to.

*EARL RUSSELL said that after the noble Lord's statement he would not press his Amendments. But he hoped that when the Highways Act was being amended this point would be borne in mind.

Amendment, by leave of the House, withdrawn.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN moved an Amendment to Clause 4 providing that the penalty for contravening this section should be that imposed "for an offence under this Act," instead of a fine of £10 as proposed in the clause as it stood. He said that for such an offence as driving off after causing an accident a fine of £10 was inadequate, especially as there was no increased penalty for a repeated offence. There was no cumulative penalty provided. He thought that in the first instance the offence should be visited by a fine, which might amount to £20, or imprisonment, which might amount to one month, and its repetition by a fine of £50, or six months imprisonment. Imprisonment was a most effectual deterrent, and it was for that reason he proposed the insertion of these words.

Amendment moved—

"In Clause 4, lines 33 and 34, to leave out the words 'liable for each offence, on summary conviction, to a fine not exceeding ten pounds,' and to insert the words 'guilty of an offence under this Act.'"—(*The Earl of Camperdown.*)

LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH: I hope your Lordships will not accept the Amendment. I think no terms can be too strong in regard to anyone who knowingly causes such an accident and then bolts; but if drivers cause damage it is certain that they will come under the purview of Clause 1 for having driven recklessly or negligently or in such a manner as to be dangerous to the public. They would, therefore, be guilty of an offence under the Act and could be punished. For causing danger to the public, or for fraud, I think that imprisonment is a fair penalty, but for this particular class of offence I do not think it is quite fair. The fine imposed may not be large enough, and it may be a question whether it should not be raised for a subsequent offence. At any rate, I am prepared to consider that point.

THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH cited the case of a driver who passed through a village and accidentally ran over a child. Thereafter the driver bolted, and if he was not caught nothing happened; but if caught he had only to pay £10. It seemed to him that the offence was a very serious one, because the driver used the extra speed of the motor-car to evade justice. In the interest of the public some penalty of the kind suggested might be inserted, for a non-cumulative penalty was of no value.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of LANSDOWNE) said that the noble Earl's illustration was not happily chosen, for the driver of the motor-car would always be liable, under the provisions of the Act, to punishment for reckless driving.

LORD TWEEDMOUTH thought that a driver who had caused a serious accident would come within either the provisions of Clause 1 or of Clause 6. The noble Lord in charge of the Bill might say whether he was prepared to increase the penalty for a second or subsequent offence, say, to £20.

THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH: Or imprisonment.

LORD TWEEDMOUTH: No.

*EARL RUSSELL said that a driver who had caused a fatal accident, if caught, would be liable to indictment for manslaughter. But in the cases they were considering he thought that the penalty provided was ample.

LORD BURGHCLERE suggested that it might be possible to approximate the penalties to those in Clause 6, and the fine might even be raised to £50 for a third offence.

EARL SPENCER said they had to contemplate the case where the driver of the car was not to blame at all for the accident. He agreed, of course, that the driver should stop when the accident had occurred, but he was not disposed to support the Amendment.

LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH: I am prepared to put down words making the fine £20 for the second and subsequent offence. I would rather not go to £50.

On Question, Amendment negatived.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN called attention to the desirability of regulating the lighting and rate of speed at night. The usual practice was for motor-cars to have very powerful lamps, the light from which covered the whole of the road and blinded those approaching the motor. The regulations had not dealt very effectively with the question of lighting, and he hoped that this matter would be seen to.

LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH: The noble Earl has raised a very reasonable question, and one upon which many communications have been received by the Local Government Board and myself. There is no doubt that some of the lamps as now used are in themselves a grievance, as they cause a great deal of fright to animals on the road. This, however, I suggest, would be better dealt with by regulation, which would be more flexible than a hard and fast provision in the Bill. The matter is not free from difficulty, because while a horse will give some indication of an obstruction ahead, a motor-car can do nothing of the kind, and therefore it is very necessary that a driver should have full light. At the same time, the lights should not be used so as to be a real annoyance, and the driver must accept the necessity of going at a slower pace at night. It is the intention of the Local Government Board to attempt to deal with this matter in the amended regulations.

THE EARL OF WEMYSS pointed out that, by Clause 6, Section 4 of the principal Act (which related to the rate of speed of motor-cars) was repealed, provided that, within any limits or place referred to in regulations made by the Local Government Board on the application of the Council of the County or County Borough in which the limits or place were situate, the speed of any motor-car should not exceed ten miles per hour. He ventured to think that the fixing of this speed limit was a departure from the principle of the Bill, and on a previous occasion he had moved an Amendment providing that the speed in towns, villages, and other populous places, and in turning corners, should be the ordinary speed of horsed vehicles. But that Amendment was negatived; and he now moved an Amendment which, while it in no way interfered with the ten-mile limit, implied that that was not to be the normal speed, but that where the public safety required it the motor-car should be driven at a much more moderate speed.

Amendment moved—

"In Clause 6, page 4, line 21, after the word 'hour' to insert the words 'or such more moderate speed as circumstances and public safety require.'"—(*The Earl of Wemyss.*)

LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH: The noble Earl is never so happy as when he is convicting somebody else of inconsistency, and he attempts to make out that the acceptance of a ten-mile limit in this clause is inconsistent with the principle of the Bill. This clause was introduced with a fixed maximum limit of fourteen miles, reduced by Local Government Board regulations to twelve, and all that we have done is to substitute for the maximum the limit of ten miles. Why did we do that? We did it in deference to the almost universally expressed opinion of the House that twelve miles was too high a maximum, an objection which I fully explained at the time I did not share, because I thought that for all purposes a twelve-mile limit was quite as safe as a ten-mile limit. But I saw from the discussion that the general sense of the House was in favour of reducing it to ten miles, and to that we gave way. Another objection to the clause as it stood was taken by the noble Earl who leads the Opposition, who stated very clearly and convincingly that what we ought to avoid was a patchwork of different speeds all over the country, and that we should simplify the matter by fixing a uniform maximum speed limit in the protected places of ten miles.

THE EARL OF WEMYSS: There may be many places where ten miles an hour is too high a speed.

LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH: As the clause now stands the Local Government Board have power to fix a less speed than ten miles in an extreme case, so that the Amendment effects no alteration in the clause, and is useless.

Amendment, by leave of the House, withdrawn.

LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH: The next Amendment standing in my name is the one suggested by the noble Earl who usually sits on the Cross Benches — Lord Rosebery. I do not myself attach very much importance to it, but I am prepared to leave it to the judgment of the House. I may say that Lord Rosebery has seen the Amendment and approves of it.

Amendment moved—

"In page 4, after Clause 6, to insert as a new clause, 'The Councils of Counties and County Boroughs shall within their areas cause to be set up sign posts denoting dangerous corners, cross roads, and precipitous places, where such sign posts appear to them to be necessary.'"—(*Lord Balfour of Burleigh.*)

THE CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES (The Earl of MORLEY) pointed out that over by far the largest area of roads in the country the bodies named in the Amendment had no jurisdiction. Would it not, therefore, be better to leave out the words "Councils of Counties and County Boroughs,' and insert "road authorities?"

LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH: The answer is this, that if you put this duty upon every road authority you will have an enormous number of divers kinds of posts set up. The idea of putting the obligation on the Councils of Counties and County Boroughs was that they might probably agree to something like a uniform kind of post.

EARL SPENCER questioned whether parish roads could be considered "within the areas" of Councils of Counties and County Boroughs. If his contention was right, these Councils would be precluded from setting up signposts denoting dangerous corners and precipitous places in parish roads.

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH: I have one other Amendment to Clause 8. Under the Act of 1896, the Local Government Board have power to limit the speed of light locomotives, and technically a motor bicycle drawing a trailer is affected by the limit speed for locomotives, which, of course, is not easily defensible. The object of the Amendment is to make the powers in the hands of the Local Government Board more flexible.

Amendment moved—

"In clause 8, page 4, at the end of Clause, to insert, as a new sub-section: The power of the Local Government Board to make regulations under Section 6 of the Locomotives on Highways Act, 1896, shall, as respects motor-cars exceeding two tons in weight unladen, include a power to make regulations as to speed.'"—(*Lord Balfour of Burleigh*).

On question, Amendment agreed to.

LORD BRAYE asked if there was any reason why the Act should not come into operation before the period fixed in Sub-section 2 of Clause 15—namely, January 1, 1904. Why should it not come into operation the moment it received the Royal Assent?

LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH: Clearly it cannot come into operation the moment it passes, because regulations will have to be issued. The country districts specified in the Bill will have to make their proposals to the Local Government Board, and I think it will require an extraordinary amount of energy on the part of everybody concerned to get it into operation even by January next year. Every effort, however, will be made to get the Act in working order by that date. I should be reluctant to limit further, than it is limited in the Bill, the time in which, if the Bill passes, the intricate negotiations and arrangements to which I have referred will have to be got through.

*THE EARL OF WEMYSS complained of a great noise which was caused a few days previously in St. James's Place by a stationary motor-car constructed like a torpedo and evidently built for speed. If all the bulls of Bashan had there been gathered together, and roared their loudest and, each in a different key, the noise could not have been worse. The motor belonged to a French gentleman, and he went out and had a talk with the *chauffeur*—the use of the word was pardonable in the circumstances. He asked him what was the name of that animal, pointing to the motor? Answer: *un Mors.* He then asked him if it was ill, and he replied that it was not. He then asked him if it always made such a terrific noise, and the *chauffeur* replied "*toujours.*" There ought to be some redress against a nuisance of that kind.

EARL SPENCER said that some motor-cars were most amiable and the noise they made almost soothing. But he agreed with the noble Earl that the particular car in question made a most ferocious noise on the occasion referred to. There should be power to check such a nuisance, but he doubted if it could be provided in the Bill.

LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH: The President of the Local Government Board is fully aware of the nuisance, and will deal with it by regulation if possible; it cannot be dealt with in the Bill.

Bill to be read 3^a on Tuesday next and to be printed as amended.

House adjourned at Six o'clock, to Monday next, a quarter before Eleven o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Friday, 24th July, 1903.

The House met at Twelve of the Clock.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, viz.:—Scottish Central Electric Power Bill [Lords].

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time.

City and South London Railway Bill; Newcastle-upon-Tyne Electric Supply Bill; Romford and District Tramways Bill; Wigan Corporation Tramways Bill; Woolwich Borough Council Bill. Lords' Amendments considered, and agreed to.

Taff Vale Railway Bill [Lords]. Read the third time, and passed, without Amendment.

Barry Railway Bill [Lords]; Birmingham District Tramways Bill [Lords]; Dewsbury, Batley, and Birstal Tramways Bill [Lords]; Manchester Southern Tramways Bill [Lords]; Maryport Harbour Bill [Lords]. As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

Mid-Yorkshire Tramways Bill [Lords]. As amended, considered; Amendments made; Bill to be read the third time.

Worthing Corporation Tramways Bill [Lords]. As amended, considered; Amendments made; Bill to be read the third time.

Bournemouth Corporation Tramways Bill [Lords] (by Order); Sutton Coldfield Corporation Bill [Lords] (by Order). Read the third time, and passed, with Amendments.

Rothesay Corporation Order Confirmation Bill. Considered; to be read the third time upon Monday next.

Scottish Ontario and Manitoba Land Company Bill [Lords]. Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bournemouth Gas and Water Bill [Lords]. Reported, with an Amendment; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

Pentillie Estate Bill [Lords]. Reported, without Amendment; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

Bill to be read the third time.

West Bromwich Corporation Bill [Lords]; Preston, Chorley, and Horwich Tramways Bill [Lords]. Reported, with Amendments; Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

POLICE AND SANITARY COMMITTEE.

Mr. HEYWOOD JOHNSTONE reported from the Police and Sanitary Committee: That the parties promoting the Brighton Corporation Bill [Lords] had stated that the evidence of John Jackson Clark, Goldstone Farm, Hove, Sussex, was essential to their case; and, it having been proved that his attendance could not be procured without the intervention of the House, he had been instructed to move that the said John Jackson Clark do attend the said Committee on Tuesday next, at half-past eleven of the clock.

Ordered, That John Jackson Clark do attend the Police and Sanitary Committee on Tuesday next, at half-past Eleven of the clock.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have agreed to—Drainage and Improvement of Lands (Ireland) Provisional Order Bill; Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 3) Bill; Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 7) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 13) Bill; Blackheath and Greenwich District Electric Light Bill, without Amendment.

Watford and Edgware Railway Bill; London County Council (General Powers) Bill; London United Tramways Bill; London, Tilbury, and Southend Railway Bill; Great Northern, Piccadilly, and Brompton Railway (Various Powers) Bill; Harrow Road and Paddington Tramways Bill, with Amendments.

Amendments to — Derby Gas Bill [Lords]; Dudley, Stourbridge, and District Tramways Bill [Lords]; Poole and District Electric Traction Bill [Lords]; Tynemouth and District Tramways Bill [Lords], without Amendment.

Scottish Episcopal Clergy Widows' and Orphans' Fund Order Confirmation Bill. Considered; to be read the third time upon Monday next.

PETITIONS.

LICENSING LAW (COMPENSATION FOR NON-RENEWAL) BILL.

Petition against, from Wheelock; and London; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.

Petition from Bradford, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

BRITISH SOUTH AFRICA COMPANY.

Copy presented, of Estimates of the British South Africa Company for 1902–3 and 1903–4 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3038 to 3041 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

MERCHANT SHIPPING (LOSS OF LIFE).

Copy presented of Return showing the lives lost by wreck, drowning, or other accidents in British merchant ships registered in the United Kingdom, during the years 1891 to 1902, inclusive (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper [C. 1253]) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

The Charity Commissioners and Hackney College.

MR. H. C. RICHARDS (Finsbury, E.): To ask the hon. Member for Tonbridge, as representing the Charity Commissioners, if he will state under what statutory authority the Charity Commissioners gave to the authorities of Hackney College any, and what, relaxation for the teaching of the Shorter Catechism or the Thirty-nine Articles, as prescribed by the Trust; whether the Commissioners are aware that an attempt is being made to amalgamate Cheshunt College and Hackney College for the purpose of removing or relaxing the Fifteen Articles of Faith laid down by the foundress, the Countess of Huntingdon, and the relaxation or alteration of which has been refused by the High Court of Chancery; and, in the event of such amalgamation being proceeded with, will the Charity Commissioners uphold the judicial decision already obtained.

(*Answered by Mr. Griffith Boscawen.*) It does not appear that the Charity Commissioners ever gave to the authorities of Hackney College any relaxation in regard to the teaching prescribed by their Trust. An application was made to the Commissioners in 1873 for relief in respect of the terms of a declaration which the trustees, ministers, and officers of the college had been accustomed to subscribe, and the trustees were informed that they were competent to alter the form of the declaration so long as it remained a profession of belief in the doctrines contained in the doctrinal articles of the Church of England and in the Shorter Catechism, as was prescribed by the Trust. The Commissioners have no cognisance of the proposed amalgamation, the control over the endowment of Cheshunt College having passed to the Board of Education, to which the correspondence in this matter was referred.

Wireless Telegraphy in India and the Far East.

SIR THOMAS DEWAR (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): To ask the First Lord of the Treasury if the Defence Committee will consider the desirability of establishing wireless telegraphy stations at strategic points in Northern India, and at selected British ports in the Far East.

(*Answered by Mr. A. J. Balfour.*) The question of the most desirable places for the establishment of wireless telegraphy stations is one which is constantly under the consideration of the Government Departments, and the eastern portions of the Empire are not omitted from their survey.

Price of Bread in France.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central): To ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if he can state the average price of ordinary (not fancy) bread per 2 kilos., corresponding to the English quartern loaf, at Paris, Rouen, Lyons, Bordeaux, and Marseilles; how many acres are under wheat cultivation in France; and if the price of bread is still regulated from week to week by the Government or municipal councils.

(*Answered by Lord Cranborne.*) The average price of ordinary bread per 2 kilos. is in Paris 80 centimes, in Rouen 72 centimes, in Lyons 74 centimes, in Bordeaux 75 centimes, in Marseilles 60 centimes. As regards the regulation of the price of bread the practice varies in different towns. An official price is fixed at Paris, but is not obligatory upon bakers. At Marseilles and Lyons the price is regulated by the municipality. At Rouen there is no regulation price, while at Bordeaux the municipality reserve the right to fix one. The acreage in France under wheat cultivation in 1902 is estimated at 6,814,936 hectares, or 16,832,890 acres.

Increase of Paid Consular Service.

SIR THOMAS DEWAR: To ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether it has yet been decided to increase the paid Consular service; and will he state how the number of paid Consuls compare with the services of the United States, France, and Germany.

(*Answered by Lord Cranborne.*) New posts are created from time to time where the interests of British trade render it desirable, but there is no present intention of increasing the paid Consular service.

Short Time in the Cotton Trade.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT: To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he can state how many cotton mills in Lancashire are now working short time, how many operatives are affected, and what is the approximate loss to them in their total weekly wage; and, further, whether he has any reports showing the cause of this short time and loss of wages; and also if there are any areas in the British Empire as suitable for the production ot raw cotton as the Southern States of the American Republic.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) There are no official figures giving the particulars asked for in the first part of the Question, but I am informed that about 700 cotton factories are working short time, the number of operatives affected being estimated at 360,000. I understand that the short time is due to a deficiency in the supply of raw cotton, but I have no information as to the cause of the shortage beyond what has appeared in the newspapers. With respect to the last part of the Question I understand that the matter of cotton growing within the British Empire is receiving careful consideration from the British Cotton Growing Association and others. The Board of Trade is prepared to give any practicable help in this matter.

Canadian Preferential Tariffs.

MR. ALFRED DAVIES (Carmarthen Boroughs): To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will state the yearly value of exports from the United Kingdom and the United States to Canada since the Canadian preference tariff for British goods has been in force; and, further, will he also state the different rebates on the duty allowed on goods from the United Kingdom, and the yearly population of Canada during the period.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) If the hon. Member moves for a Return in proper form the information shall be given.

Price of and Duty on Corn in England and Italy.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he can state the price of corn of similar quality per quarter on some recent date in this month in Italy and England respectively, and the rate of import duty per quarter levied in Italy on corn at that same date.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) According to the official bulletin of the Italian Ministry of Agriculture the price of wheat in Italy about 28th June fluctuated between 24·25 and 26·50 lire per quintal. The mean of these quotations would give a price of 25·37 lire per quintal, equal to about 44s. 2d. per quarter of 480 lbs. The *Gazette* average price of British wheat in England and Wales for the week ended 27th June was 27s. 6d. per quarter. The Italian import duty on wheat is at the rate of 75 lire per 1,000 kilogs., equal to about 13s. 1d. per quarter.

United States Market and Countries adopting Retaliatory Duties.

SIR WILLIAM HOLLAND (Yorkshire, W.R., Rotherham): To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether any country adopting a retaliatory fiscal policy has access to the markets of the United States on more favourable terms than the United Kingdom.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) I do not know what definition the hon. Member adopts of the term "retaliatory fiscal policy." I have already stated in answer to a Question that a few articles imported from Germany, France, Italy, and Portugal enjoy tariff reductions in the United States which are refused to similar goods of British production.† Details will be given in the Return which has been promised to the hon. Member for Exeter.

Remission of Corn Duty—Effect on Price of Bread.

SIR HOWARD VINCENT: To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer what has been the effect on the price of bread at Liverpool and other centres of population of remitting since 1st July the £7,000 per diem previously obtained for the public revenue by the registration duty on foreign grain, meal, and flour for the use of the British market; and if there are any figures to show that such remission has diminished the number of paupers and vagrants.

(*Answered by Mr. Ritchie.*) I have no information as to any recent change in the price of bread, except that at Liverpool at the beginning of this month there was a rise, which was due, I am informed, to peculiar local circumstances. It is evidently not connected with the corn duty. The repeal of the duty on the material from which bread is made tends, of course, to postpone and reduce any rise in the price of bread, and to accelerate any fall which may occur from other causes. I see that a well-known trade journal stated a fortnight ago that the abolition of the duty on corn had made futures lower.

London Postmen walking in Pairs.

MR. JAMES O'CONNOR (Wicklow, W.): To ask the Postmaster-General if he is aware of a recent order which prohibits London postmen from walking in pairs during the daytime, and that this order has been applied when the men are off duty; and will he explain also why a body of public servants should be so punished in consequence of the alleged misbehaviour of a few members of the staff.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) Complaints have been received from the public that obstruction and inconvenience were caused by the postmen carrying letter bags walking two or three abreast in the narrow streets in the City. An order was consequently issued that postmen were to discontinue the practice. Renewed complaint having been received this summer the attention of postmen was recently specially drawn to this order. The order was issued in the interests of the public, and imposes no punishment or hardship on the postmen. So far as I know it has not been applied to men when off duty, and it is not intended to be so applied.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxxv., 4.

Pay of Sorting Staff in London and Dublin Post Offices.

MR. NANNETTI (Dublin, College Green): To ask the Postmaster-General if he will explain on what grounds the wages of the sorting staff in the London offices have been raised to a maximum of £160 while the Dublin men's maximum is only £145; and whether, seeing that the annual increment of the London men has been raised to £6 per year while that of the men in Dublin remains at £5 4s., and that the Dublin men were supposed to be on the same scale as the men in London, he can see his way to grant the same conditions of maximum and rate of increment to the Dublin staff.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) The scale of pay rising to £160 a year by yearly increments of £6 applies only to the London staff, and no reason is seen for extending it to Dublin or any other office. The Dublin men are not supposed to be on the same scale of pay as the men in London.

Preservation of the Ruins of St. Mels Cathedral.

MR. J. P. FARRELL (Longford, N.): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether his attention has been called to the negotiations for the transfer from the local vestry of Ardagh to the County Council of the ancient ruins of St. Mels Cathedral; and whether, in view of the fact that the representative Church body, the Board of Works, and the County Council are all agreed that steps should be taken to preserve this venerable ruin, he will make representations direct to the local vestry with a view to overcoming their objections.

(*Answered by Mr. Elliot.*) I do not think that any useful purpose would be effected by the adoption of this suggestion, as neither the Treasury nor the Board of Works have any *locus standi* to make representations to the local vestry in the absence of a request to do so from the owners.

Plague Inoculation in India—Cases of Tetanus.

SIR CHARLES CAYZER (Barrow-in-Furness): To ask the Secretary of State for India whether he has received the Report of the Commission appointed by the Government of India to inquire into the cause of the Molkowal disaster, in the Punjaub, where nineteen people died of tetanus after plague inoculation; and, if so, will he state what action he intends to take on the recommendation of the Commission with a view to re-establishing confidence in anti-plague inoculation; and will he lay the Papers before the House.

(*Answered by Secretary Lord George Hamilton.*) The Report has reached me and is under consideration. It is confined to ascertaining the circumstances which led to the issue of impure plague prophylactic from the Bombay laboratory in the autumn of 1902, and the persons responsible for the same. The question of process to be used in future for the preparation of the fluid, or of the organisation of the laboratory, was not referred to the Commission, and is not dealt with in their Report. Measures had previously been taken by the Government to re-establish confidence by reverting to the former method of preparing the prophylactic, and by strengthening the staff of the laboratory. At the present stage I am unable to state what orders will be issued upon the Report, or whether the Papers can be laid before the House.

Tenders for Armoured Cruisers.

MR. J. F. HOPE (Sheffield, Brightside): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether the tenders for the armoured cruisers of this year's Naval Programme have yet been issued; and whether any fresh reason for delay has arisen since his last statement on the subject.

(*Answered by Mr. Arnold-Forster.*) The tenders for the armoured cruisers of the 1903–4 programme were issued on the 21st instant.

Refusal of Permission by Land Commission for Purchase of House and Land in County Longford.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland to state the grounds upon which the proposal to purchase a house and an acre of land on the farm of Samuel Burnett, at Abbeydarrig, Kenagh, County Longford, by the occupying tenant, Mrs. Ellen Reilly, was refused by the Land Commission; and whether, seeing that the inspector led the parties to believe that the purchase would be sanctioned, he will explain on what grounds sanction was refused.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) No agreement was entered into with Mrs. Reilly for the purpose of making her a direct tenant of the landlord with a view to the purchase by her of the small plot in question. She has been informed by the Land Commission that the advance applied for by Samuel Burnett had been provisionally sanctioned, and that no ruling had been made that she should purchase the portion of the holding held by her as sub-tenant.

Disturbance at Rostrevor.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that in Rostrevor on Sunday, 12th July, an attack was made upon several houses, and windows were smashed; that a Union Jack was torn from Orange Hall, and that divine service had to be abandoned in the Methodist Church owing to the wrecking carried on; and whether, in view of information given to the police that such action was anticipated, and of the fact that most of it was done in their presence, he can state what action, if any, the Government intend taking in the matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Atkinson.*) The facts are stated with substantial accuracy. The police present on the occasion were unable to identify any of the offenders, the crowd being composed mainly of strangers. A police sergeant was informed of the intention to remove the flag some hours before it was taken down. His failure to report the matter to his superior officers will be investigated by the Inspector-General.

Obstruction of Public Road at Lagan, near Keady.

MR. SLOAN: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to a hurling match held on Sunday, 10th May last, in the townland of Lagan, near Keady, and to the fact that during the match a rope was placed across the public road, no person being allowed to pass without paying 3d., and that several persons refusing to pay were assaulted; and, if so, whether he can state on whose authority Sergeant Hughes permitted these proceedings without interference.

(*Answered by Mr. Atkinson.*) I am informed that a rope was placed across the road on the occasion mentioned. The police are not aware that any assaults were committed. Sergeant Hughes acted on his own initiative. He has been instructed not to permit a recurrence of any similar obstruction of the public road.

Evictions on Colonel King Harman's Estate.

MR. J. P. FARRELL: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the impending eviction by Colonel King Harman on his estate near Kenagh, county Longford, of a family named Daly; and to ask him whether, in view of the circumstances of the case, he will refuse the employment of the police for this proceeding.

(*Answered by Mr. Atkinson.*) The circumstances of the case, as they are reported to me, are as follows. A man named Bartley held two houses and a small plot of land on this estate as tenant. He sublet the houses to Daly without Colonel King Harman's knowledge or sanction. Upon Bartley's death n 1901 Daly took possession of the land, also without the landlord's consent. The latter never recognised Daly as tenant, and never accepted rent from him. The landlord has taken proceedings to recover possession on the title. The reply to the second inquiry is in the negative. It has many times been decided to be the bounden duty of the Crown to afford every requisite protection in the execution of decrees of a competent Court.

Annual Cost of Infantry Soldiers at Depots.

COLONEL LONG (Worcestershire, Evesham): To ask the Secretary of State for War, the average cost per year of an infantry soldier serving with an ordinary peace regimental depot, and a similar man serving in one of the larger depots of 600 and upwards which were started during the war, taking as basis of cost the same classes of expenditure as were used in calculating the cost of an infantry soldier in a service battalion.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*) As I explained† to my hon. friend, the figures already given represented the personal charges of the individual soldier, which are identical whether he is serving with a battalion or a depot.

MILITARY WORKS BILL.

[SECOND READING.]

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.): I wish to ask your ruling, Mr. Speaker, as to whether the Resolution on which this Bill is based is a sufficient Resolution. It states that it is expedient to make further provision for certain military works, and it goes on to authorise the issue out of the Consolidated Fund of a sum, not exceeding £5,000,000, as may be required, but, if you look at the first clause of the Bill, you will see that an expenditure of £5,500,000 is provided for. The extra £500,000 is to be found by the sale of some property now belonging to the Government. I suggest that the money received from the sale of that property should go into the Consolidated Fund, and that, therefore, the Resolution should have been to authorise an expenditure of £5,500,000 instead of £5,000,000. I ask you whether, under the circumstances, the Resolution is sufficient to cover the Bill.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): There is another point which supports my hon. friend's contention though he did not raise it. It is, that if the money ought to be paid into the Consolidated Fund it should appear next year among the appropriations in aid of the Army Estimates.

*MR. SPEAKER: I think the Resolution is sufficient to cover the Bill. The £5,000,000 is the only sum which is a fresh charge on the people, the other £500,000 is to be derived from the sale of certain Government property. I think it is competent for the House to deal with that £500,000, if it chooses so to do, in the way proposed in the Bill. The general words of the Resolution in the first line are enough to cover it, and I do not think it is a new charge. It is no doubt a matter which the House has a perfect right to investigate and object to if it thinks fit, but, as a matter of order, I cannot say that the Bill is not covered by the Resolution.

MR. BUCHANAN (Perthshire, E.) complained that the Bill had only been circulated that morning. On the previous night he was informed that it was to be obtained at the Vote Office, and he got a copy of it, but he did not believe that half-a-dozen Members of the House were in possession of copies last night. The fact that it was ready for circulation was not obtained by him from any member of the Government, or from any information given by the Government; it was simply due to his going into the Vote Office and asking whether or not the Bill was ready. It was hardly fair to invite the House to consider so important a Bill as that on the very day of its issue. Of course they were all aware that the Secretary for War last Tuesday made an important statement explanatory of the objects of the Bill when the customary Resolution was submitted in Committee to the House. He did not wish to quarrel with the length or details of that statement, but there were undoubtedly facts of importance which were now discoverable in the Bill which were not alluded to from the very beginning to the ending of the statement of the right hon. Gentleman. There were also serious alterations indeed in this Bill as compared with the Acts of 1897, 1899, and 1901. He referred particularly to the schedule. The schedule in this Bill applied in a totally different form from the schedule in the Acts of 1901 and 1899. It would be within the recollection of hon. Members that a detailed schedule in regard to barracks was inserted for the first time in the Act of 1899 owing to representations made by the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition and other Members of the House. The schedule which was then arranged for, and which gave details, particularly with regard to barrack work, was inserted again in the Act of 1901, but now, without any notice being given, they had substituted for it another schedule of a totally different character, giving very much less information to the House than did the previous one. If hon. Members would glance at the schedule and compare it with the schedules in the Acts of 1901 and 1899, they would see how in the present schedule large subjects were lumped together, and large sums were asked for instead of detailed sums for certain specific works. He would only say that this was a very serious political and financial matter, because it definitely decreased their detailed knowledge of the schemes undertaken by the War Office. It lessened the financial control they had over the administration of the Department, and, more than that, it sinned against a cardinal principle of finance in the respect that it made it more difficult, indeed, practically impossible, for the ordinary person to compare year by year the progress of expenditure on the various works. The House would be well aware that one great difficulty which had to be met from year to year in the expenditure on the various works was that it was only with the utmost care that they were able, under the existing system, to follow in detail that expenditure. The difficulty was doubled by the form of the present schedule, and, so far as he could gather, in the future, under the Treasury rules, a large sum would be set apart for new works and improvements in the Aldershot district, in the Southern district, and in Ireland, whereas formerly the schemes submitted showed the specific works required at the various places. He would, however, deal with the schedule at a later stage. He proposed now to discuss more general topics.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxxv., 1139.

This was, perhaps, the last opportunity they would have this session, and possibly the last they would have during the present Parliament, of entering a protest against the continued career of extravagant military expenditure carried on by the present Government. That was the first ground of his opposition to the Bill, that they were continuing the reckless progress of extravagance and ever increasing expenditure in their military departments. He had always held the view in regard both to Military and Naval Works Bills that the policy underlying those Loan Bills was financially bad, and he believed that the arguments which had been advanced in support of that contention were even stronger now than they were a year ago. He observed that the hon. Member for the City of Exeter had an Amendment on the Paper which practically raised that point, and, therefore, regarding him, as he did, as a great financier, he would not particularly elaborate that point at present. He observed too that the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for War, like his predecessor, referred as an authority on this subject of constructing these works out of loans instead of out of the annual Estimates to Lord Randolph Churchill's Select Committee on the Army Estimates. He thought it was a little hard on Lord Randolph Churchill's reputation as a financier and Army reformer that he should be quoted in support of that career of expenditure which had been going on in military departments for the past six years. He did not think the Committee's Report, or the evidence submitted to the Committee, at all bore out the argument which the right hon. Gentleman and his predecessor had attempted to adduce from it. The case rested, as the right hon. Gentleman had himself stated, practically on the evidence submitted on that occasion by the Inspector-General of Fortifications, evidence which was roughly to the effect that the whole subject of fortifications and barrack accommodation for important stations in various parts of the Empire should be put together in one scheme which would, no doubt, cost something like five or six millions of money, and that that scheme should be submitted as a whole and the money voted in the lump. But that was very far from being the practice recently pursued under these Military Works Acts. No doubt hon. Members on both sides of the House would acknowledge that any special scheme for defence must necessarily be carried through by resort to special financial expedients, and that if they had, clearly set out, a detailed scheme involving an expenditure of large sums of money on works which were urgent as a military necessity, and which were also urgent in point of time, they were entitled to have recourse to borrowing powers in order that the scheme might be carried through without interruption, and within a strictly limited period. But that was not the case now. In those days there was a definite thing, and as a result the necessary powers were granted, and the works were carried through; the money was borrowed and was now being paid. That was a clear and consistent scheme which was laid before the House of Commons and the country, and it enabled the Government to carry the matter forward, but now these Military and Naval Works Bills had become a regular departmental practice by which the War Office and the Admiralty endeavoured to supplement the Estimates. The Estimates were eased yearly by getting power to borrow money to meet charges which really ought to be paid out of income.

The further disadvantage was also entailed that they had practically a second financial statement in regard to military matters towards the conclusion of the session instead of having, as they ought to have, one complete financial statement explaining their liabilities for the whole year at the commencement of each session. The fact was that the practice of the War Office was now to borrow money to meet charges which should be paid out of the annual Estimates, and he would just quote one or two instances in proof of that. They had not got in that Bill, as in the Act of 1901, any clearly thought-out scheme for the construction of works or for general defence works which could be once and for all submitted to the House and for which they might be asked to authorise the Government to borrow money. On the contrary, they had carried out with the loan money a variety of small works, such as additions, extensions, and improvements of barracks and rifle ranges, which should naturally be met out of the annual Estimates, and analogous charges to which did exist in the Estimates. According to the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor-General, in which more details were to be found than in the schedule to the Bill, there were items of £5,000, £1,200, and £500, and they even went as low as £103 and £13 0s. 9d., the payment of which was to be spread over a period of thirty years. That was the *reductio ad absurdum* of the whole system. In the Estimates there were analogous charges, even for the same stations and works as were dealt with in the Works Bill. Included in the Works Vote of the War Office Estimates were individual works amounting to £40,000, £50,000, and £90,000, and they were rightly being met out of the annual Estimates, but they included charges for Woolwich and the Cape, in respect of which places there were also items in the Loan Bill.

A further general consideration was the growing amount of these charges from period to period. The revised Estimates under these Acts were continually expanding. It might be imagined that the sums mentioned in the schedule represented the total commitments, but that was not at all the case. But even imperfectly as they were stated in the schedule, they had increased from £5,500,000 in 1897, to £9,500,000 in 1899, £15,800,000 in 1901, and £20,810,000 in the present Bill. As to the sum spent annually for the purposes of these Acts, and met, not out of the annual Estimates, but out of loan money, in 1902 it was £1,697,000, in 1903 £1,700,000, and for the year ending March 31, 1904, £3,450,000. Taking the Military and the Naval Works Acts together, there was to be spent out of borrowed money during the current year £7,500,000, and the total amount of our commitments under the two Acts, which, even as incompletely stated in the schedules, was £50,000,000, probably totalled £60,000,000 or £70,000,000. This practice could not possibly last. Various statements had been made during the present session as to economy, retrenchment, and the reduction of debt. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had stated that in 1906 the country would be paying about £9,000,000 in reduction of debt, but he had omitted to state that while they were reducing the debt with one hand, they were piling it up with the other. These liabilities were increasing from year to year. The first Estimates for naval and military works were never the final Estimates; further sums had always to be asked for. The present Bill contained new proposals of a far-reaching character. One would naturally expect that the Minister in charge would feel some alarm at the continuous and rapid increase of expenditure, and the right hon. Gentleman had indeed stated that the Government did not view it with anything like equanimity. But the Secretary of State had not held out any prospect of retrenchment in the future, or of the stoppage of the increase. It was true that the suggestion was thrown out that part of the increased charge in connection with the permanent garrison in South Africa might be put on the finances of India, but that, he thought, was an unworthy suggestion, and one to which he hoped the Government would not adhere. There would be an opportunity of discussing that proposal on another occasion, but he hoped that whatever burdens were thought necessary for the maintenance and defence of the Empire would be borne by those who could criticise and complain of them, and not by those who had no voice in the raising or distribution of the money or in the policy for which the money was required. As to the item for permanent barracks in South Africa, he was not prepared to vote the money until sufficient reasons for the proposal had been adduced. As recently as March last the Secretary of State said the Government had come to the conclusion that 15,000 was an adequate permanent British garrison in South Africa, and now the number had been increased to 25,000, with an expenditure of over £2,000,000. Some Members thought the proposal a first step towards the destruction of the linked battalion system. He recognised that his opinions on military matters were of no value, but he had certainly not been convinced that the system which enabled this country to send so large a force to South Africa during the recent war should be lightly thrown aside or weakened. Nor did he think the scheme would result in any reduction either of men or of money. The House were entitled to further information as to why the increase was necessary. If it was because of the condition of things in South Africa, it was a sorry comment on the reports we had had from the Cape and the speeches of the Colonial Secretary, and the House should be informed of the fact. The question arose as to who should pay, and how the money should be paid? The proposal to put any part of this money upon the finances of India was an unworthy one and he hoped the Government would not adhere to it.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order. The question of India bearing a portion of the cost of maintaining these troops does not arise on this Bill.

MR. BUCHANAN said that one of the arguments put forward to justify this increased garrison was that the men were to be placed there for the better defence of India. He had not heard that this proposal was defended or supported by the Government of India; indeed the information they had received was entirely in the other direction. This was a large scheme of aggressive military policy and a distribution of our forces on new principles which were definitely discarded thirty years ago. These proposals would increase beyond endurance the burdens placed upon the shoulders of the people of this country and at the same time it would not materially strengthen our defences.

MR. LOUGH said that an additional expenditure of £500,000 appeared on this Bill in quite a new way, setting up a precedent which the Government would find it very difficult to make good. There was £500,000 of appropriation in aid taken in reduction of expenditure. That was an exceedingly bad precedent, for it was taking another step to destroy the financial control of the House of Commons over the expenditure of the country. Therefore on that account this Bill should be regarded with extreme suspicion. They had retained the phraseology of the old Bill which stated that the object of the measure was to defray the cost of the works mentioned in the schedule. As a matter of fact no works were mentioned in the schedule. He supposed it was originally assumed that the schedule would be in the usual form but it appeared practically in blank, and they were being asked to appropriate large sums of money without the House being informed in what part of those districts or for what purposes that money was to be expended. This Bill covered a total expenditure of nearly £21,500,000 which had been sanctioned by successive Acts. This money had not been all expended, for about £12,000,000 had not been appropriated. Surely the country might go a little more slowly; and seeing that these large sums had been voted for building works not yet carried to a completion the Government might wait until they were completed before asking for another large amount. The expenditure upon this head last year was £1,700,000, and it had never exceeded that in any one year, but, nevertheless, the Government were asking for £3,300,000, or nearly twice as much money for the year ending 1904, as in the previous years. Considering the state of the finances of the country and the growing burdens which the people had got to bear, it was somewhat reckless to ask for permission to expend twice as much this year as in any previous year. The House would vote the money—in fact, the Government could make the House vote anything—but when it came to the practical business of spending the money economically it could not be done in this way. The first heading was for defence works, but no figures were given. He thought the cost of those defence works should be laid before the House before the money was voted. They had heard of elaborate defences for London, but either that had been abandoned or the proposed expenditure upon them had been considerably reduced. He thought the House of Commons ought to be taken into the confidence of the Government and they ought not to vote large sums for defence works without knowing more of the details. Because Parliament had readily granted large sums before was no reason why the Government should make any further call this year than was absolutely necessary. This item ought to disappear altogether. There ought to be a programme laid before them. He understood the right hon. Gentleman to give a promise that he would try to give the total estimate of what was the idea of the Government under the different heads. Surely the House of Commons was entitled to know what the whole scheme of the Government was, and they should not make any more grants until they knew this. Then there was a small sum of £20,000 for the barracks at Aldershot. That was preposterous!

*MR. SPEAKER: To go into the details of the schedule will be out of order on the Second Reading of this Bill. It is quite unusual to discuss every particular item.

MR. LOUGH said he did not need to labour that point any further. Those repairs ought to be provided annually and not by borrowing under a Bill of this kind. The great change made here was that instead of having the details, and the precise places in which the expenditure was to take place, together with the amounts for particular works, they had all been grouped together in districts. The Bill ought to be restored to the form in which all the other Bills were discussed. There was one item of £400,000 for the hospitals about which they ought to have some further information. Considering the present feeling of the country it did not appear to him that the principle upon which this Bill was founded should be extended more than was absolutely necessary. The principal item was this great expenditure which was asked for in regard to South Africa. He thought this was a rather hurried way in which to take such a huge sum. He wished to know if any estimate had been made of the way this money would be expended. They had been voting large sums for the construction of barracks, and they were now told that some of them would have to be sold and a great loss would thereby be entailed. He thought they ought to have some explanation why an expenditure of about £100 per man was necessary for the housing of these troops in South Africa. Then there was another large item for the administration of the Act, but that ought to come out of the annual expenditure. They kept a large staff at the War Office, and it should be quite sufficient to deal with all these questions of expenditure. The question of the staff ought to be brought before the House in the annual Votes. He could quite sympathise with the feelings of the House that it was reluctant to go into the separate matters of expenditure, but if some protest was not made an ultimate expenditure would be flung upon the nation far beyond what anybody could realise. He begged to second the Motion.

Amendment proposed—-

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day three months.'"—(*Mr. Buchanan.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not propose to go into the general questions raised by the hon. Gentleman who seconded the rejection of this Bill. I believe the fears he has expressed are totally without foundation. It is perfectly true that these successive measures have taken very large sums of money, but I do not think the present Government are altogether to blame for this. We have to ask ourselves how much of this money is due to the fact that for many years this country did not sufficiently carry out its obligations in the matter of housing and dealing with the capital expenditure which the Army and Navy necessarily involved. It is really due in no small measure, though not entirely, to the increase in the Army, justified in some directions, but not justified in other directions. It is also largely due to the fact that we have got to make up for deficiencies which ought to have been long ago remedied. I do not mean to press that point, which rather falls within the province of my right hon. friend who is in charge of the Bill. I only rise now—because my right hon. friend cannot rise after the speeches of the two hon. Gentlemen—in order that I may explain to the House at this early stage the change of which complaint has been made by both speakers in regard to the form of the schedule. It is perfectly true that the schedule is not in the shape it was last year. It differs from the form of last year's schedule in the respect that the exact locality in which the works are to be carried out is not specified, but only the large district in which the works are to be completed. I wish to tell the House in two sentences why that change should be effected. I think they will agree that the course we have adopted is justified. It is not in the least done in order to diminish Parliamentary control over these Bills, or over the expenditure authorised by the Bills, as was rather unamiably suggested by the hon. Member who moved the rejection of the Bill.

MR. BUCHANAN: It does so.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: It is not so. I will tell the House why it was done. It was found, and, I think, wisely found, that if you put in a Bill that a barrack is to be erected in a particular spot the value of land at that spot rises at once to an absolutely prohibitive price. One of the great difficulties which the Government and the House have got to deal with in these questions of capital expenditure is the way in which we are bled in the purchase of the necessary land. It is found that if you state exactly where a barrack is to be built, either you have to pay a most extravagant price for it, or you could not obtain the land at all. The law officers have laid it down that if the actual spot on which a barrack was to be erected was named in the schedule it was illegal to spend the money anywhere else. A case arose in the Aldershot district, of which my right hon. friend will give particulars later on in the debate if necessary, in which the place was fixed where the barrack was to be built, and it was found impossible to obtain land on anything like possible or reasonable terms, and in which a most legitimate attempt was made by the War Office to move the barrack six miles off, but the law officers declared that such a course was illegal.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): The right hon. Gentleman is explaining to the House the cause of this change, and perhaps he will allow me to direct his attention to a previous schedule in which, while the particular places at which accommodation is to be provided are specified in great detail, there is a lump sum of £120,000 taken for the purchase of land for barracks without any location of particular spots. That would appear to me, on the face of it, to meet the question the right hon. Gentleman is raising. The difficulty with respect to the question of land which the right hon. Gentleman points out is a very obvious one—that of everybody taking advantage of the announcement that new barracks are to be erected at certain places—and that seems to be met by this item for purchase of land.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I think I can explain this, and, if not, my right hon. friend, who is necessarily more acquainted with the details than I am, will fill up any lacunæ that I may leave. A large sum was voted for barracks, but that sum was not to be spent by the War Office as they might desire to spend it. They had not the sum given to them to dump down a barrack here and there where it suited them. They were restricted to spend the £100,000 in this or that village, and the result of being thus closely tied down was the difficulty at which I have hinted. Most naturally the owners of land, seeing that Parliament had authorised £100,000 to be spent on barracks, and knowing from the schedule that it was to be spent in their village, made the most extravagant demands, and put the War Office in a most impossible position. I think what I have said will perhaps be taken by the House as a justification of the change. I am sure it is the only reason for the change, and it is one which is adequate, and is justified by its results. Perhaps the rest of the debate may deal with the larger and more important issues raised by the Bill, and the discussion of these details may be deferred until the schedule itself is reached.

MR. COURTENAY WARNER (Staffordshire, Lichfield), said the objection to this Bill was somewhat wider than that involved in the question whether barracks should be placed in this or the other place. The objection of his hon. friend was that an enormous amount of money was to be spent without any guarantee as to how it was to be spent. What was proposed by the Bill left the whole question entirely in the hands of the War Office, and after their experience of that Department his hon. friends and himself on this side of the House, and he thought also a number of hon. Gentlemen on the other side, did not care to trust them with absolute discretion. What was proposed was capital expenditure, and he held that that, instead of being any part of a decentralisation scheme, should be determined by the Secretary of State for War himself. The right hon. Gentleman should state what was wanted for infantry and what was wanted for cavalry barracks, and he ought to specify in so many thousands of pounds the amount to be spent in one military district. He was himself very much opposed to the expenditure of money in South Africa in the way proposed. He did not believe it would be an economy. He did not understand why the sum allocated to South Africa should be put into this Bill. There was something more than £50,000 in the Army Estimates for the year which ought to have been spent on the housing of troops in South Africa, and he did not think it was fair that £2,250,000 should be borrowed for putting up permanent barracks in connection with a scheme which was going to be tried in regard to the housing of the troops in South Africa, and which probably would be reversed as other policies had been before. If the answer was that these were only temporary huts which were to be put up he did not think they ought to spend on them a large sum of money repayable in thirty or thirty-five years. The real cause for this expenditure was the enormous increase in the Army, and he must protest in every way against this money being spent on an increase of the Army before the Army we had was made thoroughly efficient. They might be told four or five years hence that a large capital expenditure was required for Military equipment. He was sure that if the War Office only tried it could make great economies in the Staff, and in the way they carried on their business.

*MR. SPEAKER: The question before the House at present is not the economical administration of the Army.

*MR. COURTENAY WARNER said he was only objecting to this vast expenditure, as the House had not had assurance and proof that everything that was being done could not be done out of the ordinary expenditure. Another objection to the Bill was that it was a condoning and sanctioning of the increase of the Army and of the scheme for the establishment of a large force in South Africa. He should like to know where the enormous force for South Africa was to be taken from, and whether there was to be a corresponding economy in England. If they spent £2,300,000 in South Africa they ought to have a corresponding decrease in England. They were told that something was to be saved, but they had no explanation of what that was to be. It appeared to him that, while this extra expenditure would be incurred, they would not save anything. As long as these extravagances went on, and the Government did not make corresponding economies, he thought the House should refuse to vote the money asked for.

MR. BECKETT (Yorkshire, N.R., Whitby) said the Prime Minister in concluding his remarks invited the House to proceed to the discussion of the larger issues involved in this Bill. He was sorry that when they discussed these larger issues the Secretary of State for War was not present. Undoubtedly this Bill to some extent involved the whole question of the military policy of the Government, and the Prime Minister himself admitted that it was in some respects due to the increase in the number of our troops that these barracks were to be erected. The position which he and his friends took up had been expressed in the Amendment which he had put on the Paper. They thought that a great portion of the expenditure provided for in this Bill was justifiable. But, on the other hand, they thought that it was due to the modifications of the military policy recently announced. No one could deny that such modifications involved an entire change in the military policy of the Government, and, in view of that fact, and of the enormous amount of money they were spending on the Army Estimates this year, was it not advisable that some of the expenditure proposed in this Bill should be postponed? This expenditure unquestionably was due to the military policy of the Government. No one could for a moment contend that our soldiers ought not to be well housed. There was no doubt that the requirements in the matter of barracks would depend on the size of the Army and the location of the troops. The scheme proposed by the right hon. Gentleman might give him satisfaction, but the House had to consider the question of cost, and the full and overflowing Army proposed by the right hon. Gentleman was not such a one as they were prepared to support. They were not prepared to undertake an excessively heavy expenditure. The right hon. Gentleman had referred to the cloven hoof of economy. He should like to know what he meant by that. Did he mean that questions of pounds, shillings and pence were not to be considered, that they were to be entirely put aside, and that, in fact, questions of economy in Army administration were never to be considered? The country would like to know how this large expenditure was to be reduced. It had been pointed out, in the course of the debate, that if they looked into the finances of the country it would be found that our ordinary liabilities had not been diminished to anything like the extent they would naturally suppose. The country would find in various ways that its expenditure was growing, and that the Sinking Fund was not doing its work properly. He ventured to say that it was time to cry "halt." This allocation of troops in South Africa unquestionably involved increased expenditure. The Secretary of State for War told them that it would involve an expenditure of another £900,000 a year. Where was he going to get the money? Was it going to be on the Army Estimates next year for accommodation of troops in South Africa? If so, it ought to be objected to. Would the right hon. Gentleman diminish the Army charges by a corresponding amount at home? He and those who shared his views had been misunderstood as having approved of the allocation of troops in South Africa. They did not approve of that unless there was a corresponding diminution of expenditure in the Army at home.

These Army Corps were to be defended on the ground that they had to protect our North-West Frontier of India.

*Mr. SPEAKER: Order, Order! This question does not arise on this Bill.

Mr. BECKETT said he bowed at once to the ruling. He asked whether the 25,000 men in South Africa were to be part of the Army Corps at all. It was obvious that if they were, the Army Corps system was incomplete.

*Mr. BRODRICK said the hon. Gentleman was making assumptions which were incorrect. When the Army Corps scheme was originally framed it provided that 15,000 men would be in South Africa, and, therefore, it was now a question as between 25,000 and 15,000.

Mr. BECKETT said there was a difference of 10,000. He understood that the 25,000 men were to be on the home establishment, and that corresponding linked battalions in England would not be necessary.

*Mr. BRODRICK said he had pointed out that there were to be 156 battalions of the line, and of these it was proposed to keep fourteen in South Africa, about seventy-one or seventy-two in India and the colonies, these latter being supported by linked battalions at home.

Mr. BECKETT said that these figures required a certain amount of consideration.

*Mr. BRODRICK said he gave them last week.

Mr. BECKETT said he supposed that, to begin with, 10,000 would be withdrawn from England and sent to South Africa. If there were an extra 10,000 to be sent to South Africa, where were they to come from? The Army Corps scheme would be necessarily incomplete. Was not the right hon. Gentleman fighting for a shadow? He wanted to make everything work into his Army scheme.

*Mr. BRODRICK said it would not make the slightest difference in any arrangements on the question of barracks.

Mr. BECKETT said the right hon. Gentleman had stated that in the last six years there had been an increase in the Army of 54,000, and that his own scheme would involve an increase of 6,000.

*Mr. BRODRICK said that so far as his scheme meant an increase in the number of the Army, it was due to the relieving of the linked battalion system, which had been so long over-strained, by forming garrison battalions for permanent duty abroad.

Mr. BECKETT said the difficulty was to know what the Army Corps scheme was. Their point was that the Army was too large, whether it was organised as an Army Corps, or in any other way; and that, therefore, the accommodation now proposed was far in excess of what it ought to be. He hoped that the views and arguments brought forward in the House with regard to the Army Corps system, and the fact of its enormous cost would, in course of time, compel the War Office to abandon that system and reduce the Army. There was a general tendency against such a large military establishment as now existed. He believed that that tendency would strengthen, and that, as time went on, his right hon. friend would be shown the danger of the existing system, and the mistake of trying to keep up this large military establishment, for which he was now asking for barracks. Surely the scheme of the right hon. Gentleman would involve a new distribution of depots. If they were to do away with linked battalions and were to have large depots they would have to put troops into them. The large depot system contemplated, he supposed, depots with 700 or 800 men in each. With reference to the locality of the barracks, he understood that there was to be a large force located on Salisbury Plain. There were objections to that from the Midlands, which would be denuded of troops. Only the other day there was a bitter cry from Birmingham that they scarcely ever saw a soldier. A request from Birmingham was very much like a command. They wanted to know where the barracks were to be located. The Army Organisation system was under consideration and discussion; and no one could say with certainty whether it would be maintained for many years, or even for one year; and it would be unjustifiable under such circumstances to give that organisation a fixed and permanent shape. Further, it had been very generally conceded that with regard to the defence of the country they ought to rely upon the Auxiliary forces to a greater extent than hitherto. He knew that the War Office objected to that; but he believed that his right hon. friend was more in favour of it than were some of his military advisers. There was undoubtedly strong jealousy against the Auxiliary forces in the minds of many soldiers; and that jealousy would have to be overcome. It was conceded even by the Prime Minister himself that they ought to rely to a greater extent than at present upon the Auxiliary forces; and if they did that they could afford to do without some of the barracks which it was now proposed to erect for the Regular forces. On those grounds he thought he had made out a good case for the postponement of the Bill. He and his hon. friend felt most strongly on this question. He thought they might claim that there had been modifications in the military policy of the Government as the result of the criticisms passed in this House on the War Office. Those criticisms would continue year by year, and would not be stilled until further modifications were introduced into the Army system. A large question had arisen which had somewhat over-shadowed the question of Army reform; but he thought nevertheless that questions had been raised that the country would neither ignore nor forget; and unless next session there was a large reduction in the Army system his right hon. friend would find that he would have to face the same opposition which had been directed against his policy with quite as much vigour as had been shown during the present session. They had endeavoured to fight this policy because they believed that in fighting it they were doing some service to the State; and next session, and if necessary for several sessions, they would continue to fight it.

*SIR A. HAYTER (Walsall) said he was anxious to bring before the House a matter in connection with the Bill which strongly reinforced the argument of his right hon. friend the Member for East Perthshire and that of the hon. Gentleman who had just spoken. He thought there was no necessity for this Bill at all. If hon. Members would look at the schedule they would see that in 1897 the amount taken was £5,458,000. That was followed by an Act in 1899 for £4,000,000 which made up the total amount taken to 31st March, 1901, to £9,458,000, out of which there had been spent to that date £3,633,719 according to the Accountant-General of the Army. The House would observe that covered a period of nearly four years, and when the third Bill was introduced his right hon. friend the Member for Wolverhampton reinforced him in his argument that there was no necessity for it, because on the 31st of March, 1901, there was an unexpended balance of £5,828,000. It was impossible that that large sum could have been got rid of. Then, in addition, the War Office took a Vote for £3,362,000. He did not know whether his hon. friend the Member for West Islington had any authority for the statement that the annual expenditure was £1,700,000. [Mr. LOUGH said it was in the Annual Accounts.] At any rate, there was a very large amount in the hands of the Government, and what reason was there for adding this £5,000,000, which would make up the total to £17,000,000, and which was not included in the Army Estimates? He thought that the House could hardly go wrong in refusing on such short notice to take this Bill into consideration. He had only had the Bill in his hands for two hours before the House met; and he thought it was very hard that they should be asked to plunge into an expenditure of this kind. His second criticism was, that there was in the schedule a great number of items which had no business to be contained in a Bill of that character, and which ought to have been in the Army Estimates. Take the case of the educational establishments at Woolwich and Sandhurst. When the subject was discussed on the Army Estimates there was not a word said about additional building accommodation being required; but he could assure the Committee, as chairman of the Public Accounts Committee, that it was impossible for that Committee to arrive at any definite understanding as to how much had been expended on any particular Vote when they had these supplementary Bills, which altogether upset the expenditure. "Staff and Contingencies" was not an item which ought to be in the Military Works Bill at all. It ought to be included in Vote A of the Army Estimates. As regarded defence works, he confessed he was in profound ignorance of what they were. Then as to South Africa, the sum of £2,300,000 for the provision of barracks was the beginning of a policy which would increase to a considerable extent. The House had not had as yet any opportunity of discussing the merits of the proposal adumbrated in the right hon. Gentleman's scheme. He supported very heartily the proposal of his hon. friend and he hoped he would proceed to a division.

Colonel NOLAN (Galway, N.) complained that there were no details given to the House with regard to the items of this Bill, and he certainly agreed with the hon. and gallant Baronet that the Secretary of State for War was bound to account for each item. The items contained in the Bill were not matters which could be discussed at a few hours' notice. The question of fortifications, for instance, was one that ought to be before the country for a year or two. Fortifications when erected were expected to last for eighty or ninety years, and the figures ought to be properly worked out and discussed before they were put into a Bill of this kind; but nothing of the kind had been done. The proper course for the Government to have pursued would have been to set out the items they required and given the House a fortnight or three weeks to consider them before bringing the Bill before the House. He complained that although the Government took care that this country was well fortified, Ireland was much neglected in this regard. So far as Belfast and Dublin were concerned there were no fortifications at all. It seemed to be quite forgotten that it was a right of war to put up a town to ransom, and ships might send an ultimatum to a town threatening to bombard it if it did not pay £200,000 or £300,000 in so many hours. Two or three big guns on shore would be sufficient to frighten away any ship; they were afraid of them. The town would then be well defended. The Government did not leave English towns undefended; they took care to have their own ports fortified but neglected Ireland in this matter. That was one of his objections to this Bill, but his main objection to this Bill was that the Government were asking for a large sum of money without giving sufficient reason. The amount asked for under this Bill would bring the total cost of the Army up to £42,000,000, and he objected to that because he thought we could put an efficient force in the field at one quarter the price. It seemed to him to be a very extravagant Bill. The land required for rifle ranges was bought at exorbitant prices, and very often land equally good for the purpose could be acquired at a price very much less. They certainly ought to have more details. The Government spent large sums on places like Gibraltar, when everyone knew perfectly well that a few heavy guns on the Spanish side could demolish the whole thing. He was the first person to oppose the Gibraltar scheme, because as everyone knew, it was as hard to fortify Gibraltar now against the new range guns as it was before for the Spaniards to climb up the 1,300 feet of rock. This was a matter upon which the House should have a great deal more information, and unless the information was forthcoming and was satisfactory he should oppose the Second Reading.

Sir JOHN GORST (Cambridge University) said he felt bound as a late chairman of the Public Accounts Committee to say a few words in support of the protest of the right hon. Baronet the present chairman. These Works Bills were inventions since his time, and they depleted still further the slender hold the House of Commons held over the expenditure of money. The Government contended that they were strictly confined to great permanent works of considerable magnitude, and that small items of expenditure which ought to find their place in the Estimates did not find their way into this Bill; but unfortunately the practice of the Government was opposed to their theory, and many items appeared in these Works Bills which ought to appear on the Estimates of that year. The House of Commons could not exercise vigilance over this Bill because it had not the power in these days that it had in days gone by. There was a time when the House of Commons was more independent; when Members recognised a stronger obligation to the constituencies that sent them there; when the strongest Government could not prevail on the House to give away their power. But now they could, by the ringing of a bell, summon men from the refreshment rooms, the newsrooms, and the library, who would vote for anything they wished them to, and the control of the House over money Bills had become an absolute farce. Would the right hon. Gentleman explain why the educational establishments, for the first time, were put into this Bill? He should have thought that and similar items certainly ought to be subjected to such discussion and criticism as could only take place on the Estimates in Committee of Supply. The other items referred to were equally inexplicable. "Staff and contingencies." What were "Staff and contingencies," for which they wanted £1,500,000. That seemed to be an item which certainly should not appear on this Bill. It seemed to him that it was a most serious protest that had been made by the Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee. So far as he could judge there was this year no necessity for any Military Works Bill at all, as the Government had already in its possession, from the residue of money provided under previous Military Works Acts, far more money than it was at all likely to be able to spend in the course of the next two years, judging by the expenditure of the past. If that were true it was utterly indefensible for the Government to come and ask for power to spend this large additional sum of £5,000,000, to be permitted to hold it in their hands in addition to the moneys they already possessed, and which they had neither expended nor were likely to expend in the course of the next two years. The Secretary for War was absent temporarily, but he would ask the Financial Secretary to the Treasury if the right hon. Gentleman in his explanation before the Bill was read a second time, would state the actual sum which was now in the possession of the Government from previous Military Works Acts, or on the 1st of April in the present year. If the conjecture of the chairman of the Public Accounts Committee was correct the Government certainly ought to give some explanation why, with ample funds already in their possession, they came and asked Parliament for an extra £5,000,000. He thought the financial laxity of this great Government spending Department had reached a point at which, if there was any independence in Parliament, it should be checked, and that it must have disastrous results for the economy and interests of the country if allowed to progress further without any protest.

COLONEL SANDYS (Lancashire, Bootle) said that, as was well known, he would not be likely to oppose any Vote for military works of the absolute necessity for which he was convinced. There was no question in which the country took more interest than the way in which the money voted by Parliament was expended. He asked for an assurance from the War Office that the money now asked for would be expended in a particular direction. But if it were not spent on the purpose for which it was asked, what became of it? The country was anxious that money should be expended in the best manner possible, but it was difficult for those interested in military subjects to ascertain exactly how the sums voted were expended. He understood that money voted had to be expended within the financial year. But it might so happen that it was not for the good of the service that the money should be expended in the year in which it was voted, and he would ask whether it was really indispensable that the money should be so expended, and whether the unexpended balances might not be carried over to the next year. He noticed that a portion of the money now asked for was for fortifications. During a recent visit to Newcastle he went to see the new defence works at the mouth of the Tyne, and he saw there what he believed to be a new gun, intended for one of the new forts, lying in the open, unprotected, and covered with rust. He suggested, therefore, that out of the moneys voted for fortifications something should be allotted for the purpose of keeping guns under cover before they were mounted.

SIR EDGAR VINCENT (Exeter) said previous speakers had opposed the Bill for various reasons, but he desired to base his opposition on the broader ground of financial principle. He did not think the real nature of the Bill was understood. It came to this, that the Secretary of State for War, finding that the large sum voted on the Annual Estimates was not sufficient, came to the House with what amounted to a Supplementary Estimate of a peculiarly objectionable character, inasmuch as there would be no attempt to pay this money out of the revenues of the year. It would be raised by loan and so burden the Budgets of future years. The objection was all the stronger because the harm done was not confined to the present moment, but the revenue of future years was forestalled in order to enable the Secretary of State to meet expenditure he had been unable to meet under the Estimates of the year. The practice was very similar to that of a spendthrift son who, finding his annual allowance inadequate, supplemented it by having recourse to moneylenders, and pledging for the loan he thus obtained his future allowance. It had been argued that it was preferable to base the repayment of loans on future Estimates because, by imposing that burden upon future Secretaries of State, there would be an inducement to them to become more economical, but that view, in his opinion, was based upon an altogether too optimistic idea of the character of these gentlemen. It could not be supposed for a moment that the Secretary of State for War in future years would say that the military services of the country required an expenditure of £35,000,000, but as his predecessor in 1903 was extravagant he would content himself with £33,000,000 instead of £35,000,000. The whole supposition was preposterous. It was far more likely that such a Secretary of State would say, "What was done in 1903 is no concern of mine, and I cannot allow the Army to suffer by the fact that the House of Commons was then foolish enough to allow the Minister for War to pledge my present revenue." He ventured to assert that the procedure under which these capital sums were raised was nothing more nor less than the procedure adopted in some foreign countries, and termed the raising of an extraordinary budget. This Military Works Bill was in all essential features identical with the extraordinary budgets which did such considerable damage to the credit of the Second Empire. The sums thus expended were not included in the Budget of the year; they were not subject to the control of the House as were the annual Estimates; they were not in the finance account, were not included in the annual Return of revenue and expenditure, and were not in the profit and loss account of the country. No mention of these sums was made in the Budget statement, and yet it was known, or ought to have been known, that there was to be an additional expenditure of £9,301,000. He ventured to say that this system was dangerous and misleading.

Early in the session complaints were made — justifiably in his opinion — of the enormous growth of military expenditure, but the figure of £34,700,000 at which the Army Estimates were put was only apparent. The real figure was £3,500,000 more. Under a strict and sound system of finance the Vote would have been something like £38,000,000. Outside the ostensible and apparent expenditure of the country there was another kind of expenditure. Large sums were carried from the Treasury to the War Office by the front door, but considerable sums were also taken by what he might term the backdoor, and over those sums the control of the House of Commons and the country was practically non-existent. Military expenditure had grown with alarming rapidity, but, outside the figures ordinarily known, authority had been given during the last seven years for the expenditure of an additional £16,000,000. Surely this aggravated the case considerably when the spirit of economy or of extravagance at the War Office was discussed. He would go even farther. The objections to the plan were not limited to the War Office; they were even graver in their application to the general financial position of the country. In the Chancellor of the Exchequer's estimate an inadequate sum was provided, and when he came down and said that, having calculated the full expenditure on the Navy and Army, there would remain £6,500,000 to go to the Sinking Fund, he was talking without proper financial basis. So far from that being the case, the net indebtedness of the country at the end of the year would be greater than at the beginning. The Chancellor of the Exchequer spoke of redeeming the total debt in fifty years; on the present basis it would never be redeemed, for, in a year of peace, instead of there being a Sinking Fund there would be a deficit. It had been argued that this was due to the spirit of extravagance in the country. He ventured to think there was another reason—viz., that the bad financial system under which the naval and military Estimates were presented for the criticism of the House and the country rendered the financial position so obscure that it was almost impossible to ascertain the real state of the case. It really required no argument from him to show that the system was not only misleading, but dangerous. It was apparent that the method of forestalling the military budgets of the future must also gravely prejudice the military efficiency of the future, as the Secretary of State would not have at his disposal the entire sum allotted to him, a large proportion of it being ear-marked for the payment of past debts. The system produced uncertainty, and unjustly and improperly diminished the control of the House over expenditure, and also seriously imperilled the financial credit of the country, which was already suffering from so many diverse causes. He was against the Bill, not because he objected to this particular expenditure—into that question he did not enter—but because it ought to have been put on the annual Estimates of this year or deferred till next year. He believed it was of the highest importance to the country to put a stop to this pernicious system of extraordinary budgets, and to revert at the earliest date to the old practice of paying our way.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON (Dundee) said the House had listened with great interest to the serious arguments of the hon. Member opposite, who was well justified in making a purely financial criticism, inasmuch as the Bill was not only a military, but also a financial measure. It was backed by both the Secretary of State for War and the Chancellor of the Exchequer, but the latter had not put in an appearance at all to defend a Bill of which he was the official sponsor, and which had been attacked mainly on grounds which it was his business to examine. Reference had been made to an attempt to draw from the Secretary of State for War a statement of the amount of money which would be involved in the new loan, and the allusions then made to the precedent set in connection with the Naval Works Bill. As he had something to do with setting that precedent, he might say a word in defence of it. For the purpose of debate on the ordinary naval Estimates we asked the Admiralty what was the amount required for the new Naval Works Bill, and the hon. Gentleman opposite very wisely gave us the information; and so we were able to discuss the last Navy Vote with the full possession of the whole of the demands that were to be made for the Navy. That was the reason why he should have liked the same course followed in the case of the Army. The hon. Gentleman opposite placed the total expenditure at £34,000,000, but he would add another £3,500,000 which was required under this Bill. That gave a total of about £38,000,000. The result of their examination of the Navy Estimates was that they discovered that for the Navy they were paying this year about £40,000,000. They had to add to that £38,500,000 for the Army, and this made a total expenditure upon the Army and Navy of something like £78,500,000 sterling. The right hon. Gentleman might ask them to exclude the abnormal expenditure, and he was quite willing to take the normal expenditure, which on the Army and Navy amounted to no less than £70,000,000. The last item in this enormous military budget was the sum involved in the present Bill, amounting to an expenditure on the Army and Navy in the present year of something like £1 15s. per head for every man, woman, and child in the United Kingdom. This meant an expenditure of nearly £9 per average family of the population of the United Kingdom. That was the sum they were paying for the military and naval defence of the Empire in the present year. He wished to point out that the benefit of this expenditure accrued not only to the population of the United Kingdom, but to those living in the uttermost parts of the Empire as well. The people of the United Kingdom bore the whole of this enormous burden for the Navy while the benefit was shared in an equal degree by all the outlying portions of the Empire, which contributed almost nothing with the exception of India. India paid its full share of Imperial defence, and it was not feasible or possible to add an additional burden to India either on account of the Army or the Navy.

*MR. SPEAKER: It will be out of order to discuss colonial contributions upon this Bill.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON said that £3,500,000 was being asked for, and this was a burden which would almost alone have to be borne by the United Kingdom, whilst the benefit of it would be shared by all the Empire. The right hon. Gentleman had explained the absence from the schedule in this Bill of the details contained in a former Bill, and if he followed him rightly his explanation was that it was not desirable to mention localities, because when the locality was known the value of the land went up. That appeared to be the sum and substance of the right hon. Gentleman's contribution to the debate. He thought it would be possible to indicate the locality without specifying the actual place.

*MR. BRODRICK: They are specified in general terms.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON thought there might be some limit stated, as in former Bills, indicating the neighbourhood or districts without naming the actual place. That was a fair comment upon what the right hon. Gentleman had stated. They had recently had an extraordinary case in which the State was compelled to pay eighty years purchase for land, and they all considered that that was an outrageous sum. In that case the State had to pay it, although there was no divulging of the Admiralty's intention of purchasing beforehand. He supposed in that case other sites were considered, but he did not know whether the land was purchased in this case by a person whom the owner knew as the representative of the Admiralty. The question of purchasing land for the purposes of the defence of this country was one of the most important subjects that the House could consider. He thought that before long they would want a new system of compulsory purchase if these Bills were to go on. He should like to know if the War Office ever put into force their powers of compulsory purchase.

*MR. BRODRICK: Often.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON said he supposed that power was used after the inflation of the value had taken place.

*MR. BRODRICK said they did not use these powers for ordinary purposes as between the War Office and private owners unless the price was greatly inflated. He wished to point out, however, that under compulsory purchase in Scotland it was the practice of the Arbitration Boards to award 50 per cent. additional value for a compulsory sale. That was the most difficult item they had to contend with in regard to obtaining land for military works.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON said that those who had had practical experience of arbitrations in Scotland told him that the view of the right hon. Gentleman in regard to arbitrations in Scotland was entirely wrong. All he had to say was, if that were true when the State, which was the ultimate owner of all the land, wanted a particular portion for the defence of the whole, if it was compelled under a compulsory system by arbitration to give 50 per cent. more than the real value, it was high time that that system was brought to an end. In that case it would be their duty to insert a clause in the Committee stage of this Bill to strengthen the power of the State, in taking back its own, by laying down, as an instruction to the arbitrators, that they should assess nothing for compulsion, and that the landowners should not be able to inflict such a heavy burden upon the country. Although the schedule of this Bill could not be discussed in detail, he submitted that the schedule was really the Bill. It was most unfortunate that in this, as in many other respects, the War Office had not followed the lead of the Admiralty and given them the same sort of schedule as that which was contained in the Naval Works Bill. The Naval Works Bill informed the House what the works were, what the total cost was to be, how much had been spent up to the end of last year, how much was to be spent this year, and what were the new naval works for which the expenditure was required. The hon. Gentleman opposite would acknowledge that, in dealing with these Bills, the discussion had been confined mostly to the new items, and the old items had not been raised again and again. Why were they not to know the particulars in this Bill which the Admiralty had never hesitated to give in the Naval Works Bill? They ought to have given the total estimated cost of every one of the headings mentioned in this Bill. They might also have had a column giving them the date of the completion of the works. They ought also to have had some means of tracing the new items. Under this Bill they had not the faintest means of knowing how the money was being spent or to what extent.

It was a revelation to him to hear from his right hon. friend that there was, under the existing Military Works Acts, such an enormous sum in hand. They had been told that the powers to borrow contained in previous Acts were not exhausted to the extent of £10,500,000. Was that true? Would the Secretary of State for War say whether it was true or not? If that amount remained unexpended, why had it not been expended within the time intended by Parliament? The intention of having these Bills originally was that Parliament should vote just enough money for about two years, and that the necessity should be imposed upon the Government of coming back to the House when the money was exhausted in order to ask for more. Why had they hesitated or failed to spend the money they were empowered or directed to spend within a given time? It used to be argued that it was their bounden duty to spend up to the last £1,000 authorised. If that was a good argument in the past would the right hon. Gentleman explain why so large a portion of the money already voted by Parliament had not been spent at all and remained in hand. With a sum like £10,500,000 in hand why did they come forward with a new Military Works Bill at all? Why did they come forward now asking for more borrowing powers? They could not require them for the old items because there was a clause in the first Military Works Act which was automatically repeated in subsequent Acts, and which enabled them to use money not spent upon one item upon another. They did not require fresh borrowing powers for old items. There was another item in the schedule for barracks in South Africa which called for an expenditure of nearly £3,000,000. Up to 1897, before the war, an expenditure on barracks amounting to £250,000 had been authorised. Now they were asked for an additional expenditure amounting to £3,000,000. That was a startling contrast. There had been two theories put forward about this expenditure. The hon. Member for Whitby had discussed this point from the military side, and he would not deal with that. This scheme might be represented as part of the Army Corps organisation in South Africa. His own belief was that it really formed part of the scheme of the military occupation which followed the war. They might cover and cloak it up by contending that it was necessary for the defence of India, but that was a new theory altogether. They might say that the soldiers in South Africa were to be treated as part of their ordinary forces, but he did not believe that the House or the country would accept the proposal to find accommodation for 25,000 soldiers apart from the present state of affairs in South Africa. Therefore a proposal of this kind was out of place in a Bill like this. They could not consider this item without considering at the same time the situation in the Transvaal, the Orange River Colony, and Cape Colony. Surely they might have had some further information. Were these buildings to be erected in the new colonies or the old colonies? Surely they could have that detail furnished them, for that would not send up the price of land, even in the Transvaal. His main point was that he could not accept this proposal either as part of an Imperial Army scheme or a scheme for the defence of India, and he must insist upon regarding it as part of the plan necessary to maintain our military occupation of South Africa. Therefore this was an item which ought to fall into the account of South Africa itself. They heard some months ago from the Colonial Secretary glowing accounts of the prosperity of the new South African colonies and of surpluses in the budgets. They were told of the money that was to be advanced by the new colonies for paying off a portion of the war debt. It was idle to talk of any surplus at all in these new territories until they had saddled them with the cost of the military occupation. It was unfair that the people of these Islands should be compelled to bear a burden, the benefit of which extended equally to all portions of the Empire. He hoped this question would be fully threshed out in Committee, and he trusted the right hon. Gentleman would be able to give satisfactory answers to the questions he had addressed to him.

SIR M. HICKS BEACH (Bristol, W.) said he would detain the House only a very short time, but he was anxious to make a few observations on two points which had been dealt with in the course of the debate. The Bill had been opposed on two main grounds. The first objection had, he thought, been fairly represented in the speech of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Cambridge University, and it was that for the purposes named in this Bill the better course to have taken would have been that any such expenditure for military works should have been included in the ordinary Estimates of the year. He did not at all deny that there was force in that argument, and he did not at all deny that there was a temptation to increased expenditure if the money could be obtained by loan. But as he had been himself responsible for several Bills of this kind during the past seven or eight years, he must state his opinion that in no other way could the expenditure, which is considered by the Government and Parliament necessary for such purposes as those named in this Bill, have been properly provided. What were the facts? Would any hon. Member who took the opposite view look at the schedule in this Bill? In the schedule of the present Bill the expenditure provided for under it, and under the previous Military Works Acts, was set out under three great heads. There was, first, defence; second, barracks; and third, ranges, including accommodation for manœuvring and mobilisation. He could not but think that expenditure with regard to matters of so completely a permanent character, and necessarily so large at any particular moment that sums were required for the purchase of land, for the construction of defence works, or for the purpose of ranges, including arrangements for manœuvring and mobilisation, could not properly be put on the Estimates for the year. The country in these matters had a permanent and valuable asset, and considering that the repayment of the sums borrowed was only spread over a term of thirty years, he did not think that that was an undue burden on the taxpayers of the future compared with the taxpayers of the present. Then came what he admitted was a more questionable item relating to barracks. There he thought there ought to be the utmost care on the part of those charged with this expenditure, that nothing should be included in the loan for the purpose of barracks except expenditure which was of a reasonable and permanent character. Small sums required for ordinary repairs, additions, or ordinary restoration, certainly ought not to find a place in a Bill of this kind. He thought the War Office was acting on that principle. These Bills now, and previously, were therefore justified as being the only way in which the money required for these purposes could be properly provided, but he was bound to make an addition to that by asking the House to consider the amount provided by Parliament during the past few years.

In 1888 the Imperial Defence Act was passed, under which a sum of £2,600,000 was provided for the defence of our ports and coaling stations. In 1890 the Barracks Act, under which £4,100,000 was provided for the construction of barracks, was passed. In the three years, 1897, 1899, and 1901, as appeared from the schedule of the Bill, £15,810,500 was sanctioned by Parliament for the purposes named in the Bill; and now in 1903 they were asked to add £5,000,000. That was a total of £27,500,000 since 1888. How much longer were they to go on at this rate? He attached every importance to the statement made by the Prime Minister at the outset of this debate. They had to make up grave arrears. There was no doubt that their predecessors, probably on both sides of politics, did neglect matters connected with defence works, the provision of ranges, manœuvring grounds, and other matters; and that the provision of proper barrack accommodation had been cast on them now. But there was this additional matter to consider. Barracks which were considered to be sanitary and comfortable thirty years ago were no longer held to be adequate for the accommodation of the troops. He hoped that his right hon. friend would exercise a little discretion in matters of this kind; for, having himself been over the new barracks at Malta and Gibraltar, which were being built under loans recently granted, it seemed to him that the accommodation had been of a character almost too good. Then there was the question of the strength of the Army that was to be provided for in the matter of barracks. He thought, seeing the enormous sums which had been provided, the time had come when the War Office might see some end to this expenditure, and might return to the normal system of placing it on the ordinary Estimates. They had to deal with exceptional circumstances; but these exceptional circumstances could not last for ever; and the amount now sanctioned was so large that he hoped his right hon. friend might find it possible to deal with it in regard to the future. He reminded the House that there was one very salutary check on loans of that kind which he hoped Parliament would maintain—namely, that the sanction was only for a limited period, and that on the Estimates must appear a sufficient sum for the Sinking Fund. So that they had provided a national Sinking Fund which could not be touched by any one.

Then he came to the second ground of objection, stated by the hon. Members who moved and seconded the rejection of the Bill, that the expenditure under the Bill was unnecessary. He did not think that the House would take that view. He had heard no real objection to the provision made for defence works and ranges. It had been suggested that either in the schedules or in some Papers to be presented to Parliament, as had been the case on former occasions, some more definite information should be given to the House as to the particular places in which this expenditure was to be incurred. He did not think that it had ever been the custom to state the places where the expenditure was to take place on defence works or where ranges or manœuvring grounds were to be formed. He did not, therefore, ask his right hon. friend for any statement on that matter, for the reasons given by the Prime Minister. He expressed the hope, with regard to ranges and manœuvring grounds, that the needs of different parts of England, Scotland, and Ireland would be considered, rather than any addition to those already possessed by the Government either at Aldershot or Salisbury Plain. When they came to barracks, he must say that he did not recognise the force of the objection stated by the Prime Minister as to the expenditure to be incurred in the case of sites. His right hon. friend had stated that if particulars were given under this head it would raise the price of land, and an instance was given. He should have thought it might have been possible to vary the site of the barracks and so avoid any loss to the country. He could not himself believe that any real difficulty had been found on that account. Surely Parliament ought to know what the Government proposed to do with the money voted for this purpose so far as they could be told without injury to the public interest. He hoped that his right hon. friend would reconsider the point, and that he would be able to give the

House more information than he saw in the schedule of the Bill.

One point remained, and that was the expenditure proposed to be incurred for the hutting of troops in South Africa. The hon. Member who had just sat down said that they ought not to incur that expenditure, and that it ought to be a charge on South Africa rather than on the taxpayers of this country. He did not think that that was a practicable view. He understood that his right hon. friend would have had to propose a considerable sum for barracks in this country if he had not proposed this £2,500,000 for hutting accommodation in South Africa. But he did think that in connection with this matter the Government ought to consider whether South Africa ought not to bear some portion of the annual maintenance of these 25,000 troops it was proposed to retain there. He should not enter into the question whether any part of the charge should be placed on the revenues of India. In his opinion India was not unfairly treated in the matter of expenditure; and if it could be fairly shown to Parliament that India would really benefit by having these troops in South Africa, he did think that there would be fair reason for some claim on the revenues of India. But if there was a claim on India, there was also a claim on South Africa. What were the facts? We were to maintain 25,000 men in South Africa. We were to maintain them at a very considerable additional cost as compared with their maintenance in this country. Who reaped the benefit of that cost? Of course the people of South Africa. Why in the world should they be excused from bearing a portion of the cost? The Secretary for the Colonies had very properly imposed upon the Transvaal a charge of £30,000,000 towards the expenses of the war. For himself he attached more importance to the Transvaal and Orange River Colony bearing a part of the cost of the garrison of the future than he did as to that charge. He believed that the result of their bearing part of the cost might be that there would be an inclination to lessen the garrison, greatly to the benefit not only of this country but to the peace of South Africa in future. He only mentioned this because he wished to commend it to the careful consideration of the Government. For himself, subject to what he had said, he certainly could not join in opposing this Bill. He however trusted that by passing this Bill the House of Commons would not be precluded from a full and complete discussion of the new Army policy and the fresh arrangements which were contemplated for maintaining 25,000 men in South Africa in future—involving as it seemed to him some very considerable changes in the composition of our Army—when the proposal was made, as he supposed it would be, on the Estimates of next year.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said this discussion had been of a most instructive and useful character, and had been remarkable for the great unanimity of the opinions expressed, he would not say altogether in condemnation, but, at all events, in criticism of the method of raising money for public purposes by way of loans. They had always understood that a loan ought not to be resorted to except for some definite and easily defined separate purpose of a permanent character which could not be dealt with in the ordinary Estimates of the year. He dared say there were some items in this Bill which came under this category, but there were a great many of them which he believed did not. Taking the case of barracks, the right hon. Gentleman said that all repairs and expenditure on ordinary maintenance ought not to come under a loan, but ought to be provided for by the Estimates of the year. He should think that that was the course followed. But there were in the ordinary Estimates of the year a number of items for the extension of barracks and the creation of new barracks, and he could not distinguish between them and a great many of the items in the Bill, and he doubted whether any one going over the list could see any good reason why one should be placed under the loan and another should be placed in the ordinary Estimates of the year. That was where confusion and the want of proper control over public expenditure seemed to him to come in. He admitted that they must have loans on proper occasions. The right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down asked how long this great expenditure was to continue. The right hon. Gentleman had accustomed them to these homilies of his, which they had received with applause and sympathy, but he had always neutralised his homilies by his action when he was in charge of the finances of the country. He did not imagine for a moment that the right hon. Gentleman had not exercised great supervision over expenditure, but he was bound to say that they did not see in the result any very great benefit from his exertions.

SIR M. HICKS BEACH: The right hon. Gentleman has often made that charge against me. Now I will reply to him very shortly. If it had not been for me, this very Bill two years ago would have been something like £4,000,000 higher than it was.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said he was glad to hear it. Of course the right hon. Gentleman was very properly and loyally anxious not to say too much, or anything which would be in the nature of imputation against his former colleagues; but, so far as he had been able to observe, the right hon. Gentleman was not able to stem the current of expenditure from which the country was now suffering. He only hoped that the right hon. Gentleman, whose influence might be even greater now than it was when he was in office, because his power of influencing his late colleagues might be enhanced by his present position, would use that influence to secure that an end would be put to these periodical Loan Bills, which were now being treated as if they were a regular necessity of our financial system. Every two years, or three at the outside, there was a Loan Bill. A Question was asked at the beginning of the Session, "Is there to be a Military Works Bill this year?" and there was almost a feeling of disappointment if they heard that there was no occasion for it. That was a state of feeling which they ought to set themselves against. He looked to the right hon. Gentleman, now that they heard how successful his efforts had been before, to continue in the same useful path. The question had been greatly discussed whether in a Bill of this sort the details ought to be inserted in the schedule in greater fulness than they were this year. The discussion on the Bill of 1899 showed what was the opinion of the House of Commons of that day. The schedule to the Bill of that year gave a general heading, "Defence Works"; another equally comprehensive heading of "Barracks"; another of "Ranges," and another of "Staff and contingencies." A protest against that arrangement was made, with the result that in the amended form of the Bill they were given the particular places where the barracks were to be built, the particular sums expected to be expended upon them, and, in fact, all the information which they could desire. The Prime Minister had alleged that this led to extortion on the part of those who had land to dispose of in these localities. He agreed that if that were so Parliament should protect itself by taking powers to acquire land for the public need on reasonable terms, and not leave the Government at the mercy of exorbitant extortioners. But, after all, supposing more money was paid here and there for land in these circumstances, he would set against that the economy that was effected by having this statement before the House.

With regard to South Africa, he agreed with the right hon. Gentleman who had just sat down, that if they were to maintain this largely-increased force of 25,000 men, and spend these millions in South Africa for the benefit of that country, then there should be a contribution from South Africa towards the maintenance of the force. One of the strongest arguments in favour of it was that which was used by the right hon. Gentleman, that it gave some hope that there might arise, by-and-bye, a desire on the part of the people of South Africa to be relieved of that contribution. If they were to keep 25,000 men constantly in South Africa, and supposing, ten years hence they thought it desirable to reduce that force by 5,000 men, would they be able to do it? What an uproar, what a declaration of a feeling of "Little South Africanism" there would be in

South Africa if they proposed to take away those troops. We delivered ourselves from that position thirty years ago, by bringing home troops from every part of the world and concentrating them in this country. What had been the result? Take the case of New Zealand. Up to that time they were never without Maori wars. There was constant ill-feeling between the different races, and constant difficulty. When it was announced that we were going to remove our troops, New Zealand, with great good sense, came to terms with the Maoris and there was no longer any trouble at all. That was, perhaps, an extreme case, and was not likely to be repeated in any other part of the Empire. But he hoped they would have some contribution from South Africa if this large force was to be maintained there. The right hon. Gentleman referred to the £30,000,000 that were to be paid by the two colonies in South Africa. They would be very glad to see these £30,000,000 when they were paid. But, apart from that, the fact that this contribution might be a removable burden upon them would give some hope that possibly this force in South Africa, and the expense of it, might be reduced. He was glad his hon. friend had moved this Motion, and he should vote with him. He hoped that this debate, which had in the main been a protest against this method of raising money for the public service, would have some effect in preventing in the future the introduction of Bills of this sort.

*MR. BRODRICK said he hardly agreed with the right hon. Gentleman that this debate had been in the main a protest against Bills of this sort, because he had himself sat through periods in that House in which there had been no Bills, and periods when there had been Bills, and he knew that on the initiation of this system, which was due to the economical instincts of Lord Randolph Churchill, the general view of the House was that the haphazard system under which the provision for barracks and defence works had been initiated, and not carried out, should be brought to an end. He sympathised with what fell from his right hon. friend the late Chancellor of the Exchequer when he justified the last three loan Bills for which he was responsible, and he thought the very statement which was elicited from his right hon. friend by the right hon. Gentleman opposite was one which completely vindicated his right to bring forward the Bill which was now before Parliament.

His right hon. friend had said that the Bill of 1901 would have been £4,000,000 or £5,000,000 larger if it had not been for him, and the right hon. Gentleman opposite immediately seized on that as showing that £4,000,000 or £5,000,000 had been saved to the country. He could not imagine a more delusive application. What could it matter to the House whether, if barrack accommodation must be provided for 25,000 men at a cost of, say, £10,000,000, £5,000,000 was voted for half the number of men in 1901, and the remaining £5,000,000 at the present moment? The point the House had to consider was, had these barracks got to be provided, could they be provided, and was the sum likely to be economically expended. Now, economy was the vindication and the entire substratum of all these Bills. What was the other system? Not a business man in that House would give his sanction to it for a moment. Was it conceivable that they could get contractors to engage in large undertakings if they were to bind them down to spend so much money, well or ill, by March 31st of every year, or that the War Office, three or four months beforehand, were to frame Estimates for the following year, allowing for the surrender to the Exchequer of, say, £80,000 or £100,000, on the assumption that some impediment to building would take place in January? That system led to every species of extravagance; it was an inducement to every officer and contractor at all hazards to spend the money committed to him; and every farthing which went to the Exchequer to pay off the National Debt in consequence of the money not being expended was, he submitted, a fraud on the taxpayer, who was asked to vote the same money twice over for the same services. At this moment their contracts were open to the investigation of the Public

Accounts Committee every whit as much under the system of Bill as of annual Estimates; and he ventured to say that the review of the work which took place was carried on every whit as effectively on these occasions as in Committee of Supply.

The right hon. Gentleman had said that there was practically no separation between the different classes of works carried on by Estimates and by loans; but he was sure he would not have made that observation if he had had before him the schedule of the larger works over £1,000 which were in the Estimates this year. There, without exception, the sums of money were taken for the provision of drainage, electric light, additions or large repairs to existing buildings, and the like, works which were not in the least in the same category as the works and barracks in the present Bill. He did not know that he need labour the figures which the late Chancellor of the Exchequer gave them as to the amount of these Bills, but he would recall to the mind of the House that a large number of old barracks had to be reconstructed. It was natural that hon. Members should ask what finality they might expect in this respect. The sums hitherto taken amounted altogether to something like £16,000,000 or £17,000,000 for barrack accommodation. This included very considerable additions for colonial troops and coaling stations, and barracks had had to be built for nearly 60,000 men. He was only giving rough figures. The sum hitherto taken would house somewhere between 80,000 and 90,000 men, so that they were renewing barracks for something like 30,000 men, or possibly more. He was quite certain that those who knew what our barracks were twenty years ago would say that we had not got to the end of the business by reconstructing barracks for 30,000 or 40,000 men. But the sum he was asking the House to vote to-day, as far as they could estimate, would complete the accommodation for the fighting units' troops. There were also Departmental troops and accessories; but they could not undertake contracts immediately for those, and it might hereafter be necessary for whoever represented the War Office in that House to ask for further provision.

He did not propose to discuss the South African question, but it should be clearly understood that they were not asking for any sum to duplicate barracks. As to the amounts unexpended, and dealing with the present year, of which four months had already passed, at present out of £15,800,000 which had been voted £10,500,000 had either been spent or was likely to go out in the present financial year. But beyond that there were heavy commitments on contracts already made for barracks under these loans, which were not only sums paid out because the contractors had not earned them, and the amount not actually allotted was comparatively small. In regard to the defence works nearly the whole of the money had been expended, and the money for ranges and training grounds had also been largely paid out, and the money for barracks where they had had the land. But he could not press too strongly on the House a fact which had caused them to ask the House to forego the actual items of the schedule of the Bill. The hon. Member opposite had spoken very strongly about difficulties in obtaining land for Government purposes. He would give an instance which occurred in the purchase of Salisbury Plain. After they had purchased a large amount of land on an average at about £8 or £9 per acre they had to deal with some of the smaller holdings. They were actually in treaty for a small farm, through a private individual, for the War Office did not appear, and the farm was nearly knocked down to them for £10,000. But, unknown to their agent, somebody bid £11,000, and got the farm. They then treated with the new owner, but he declined to sell, and they accordingly enforced compulsory powers against him. As a result of the arbitration, the arbitrator being the late Lord Ludlow, who was specially selected as likely to give a fair verdict, a verdict was given against them for £15,750, although all the surrounding land was valued at a much cheaper price. [Colonel LEGGE: How many acres were there?] He believed the farm was one of about 1,100 acres. He could assure the House that on all these occasions they found there was but one way of getting land cheaply; that was, without its being known that they were in the market, to negotiate privately through some private individual. He did not want to treat of matters that were passing at the present moment, but he could assure the House that there was no power they had to enable them to get land on fair terms which they were not using. The one power they had resorted to at times, that of compulsion, was the one from which they had got the least satisfaction.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON asked where the barracks were to be built in South Africa.

*MR. BRODRICK replied that in the new colonies barracks were being built in the neighbourhood of Pretoria, Middelburg, Barberton, Potchefstroom, Bloemfontein, and Harrismith. As regarded the Cape Colony, they were in the middle of a negotiation. They proposed to sell their barracks in Cape Town itself. They occupied a very valuable site, but were not well-placed for the accommodation of the troops. They felt convinced a large sum could be obtained for these barracks, and they proposed to spend that money and no more in building barracks elsewhere. He hoped he should not be pressed further on that point. There were reasons which made it desirable that he should not make a precise statement at that moment. The troops to be housed in South Africa undoubtedly made the largest demand upon them under this Bill; but in this country they had to provide for one cavalry regiment and fifteen batteries of artillery altogether. The War Office had loyally accepted the arrangement the late Chancellor of the Exchequer made on behalf of the Treasury that the hutments of a special character which had been put up in various places should be taken as sufficient for the accommodation of the troops. But those hutments required accessories—married soldiers' quarters, offices, recreation rooms, and so on—for which they had to come for money under this Bill. They had also to complete the garrisons at various coaling stations which had been increased and in which the troops, mostly colonial, had been housed for a long period in temporary quarters. All these, he thought, were grounds which should appeal to the House. There were other matters under the Bill for which he hoped to have the assent of Parliament. They proposed to spend money on training grounds, not so much in the vicinity of the present barracks as in providing the necessary space both in Scotland and Ireland, where training grounds were very largely required. He had some hope that in the North of England, too, they might be able to obtain some facilities for training which they had not at present. They had had to take a very considerable sum under this Bill both for hospitals and educational establishments. Their hospital accommodation, like their barracks, had not been completed up to date, and it was of the utmost importance, especially with all the new appliances now used in hospitals, that they should not find themselves behindhand in this respect. With regard to educational establishments, as he had already intimated, the Government proposed to do something to increase the accommodation at Sandhurst and Woolwich; and, considering the largely increased number of officers entering the Army, he did not think they would be accused of being profligate in expenditure if they asked the House to sanction the sum put in the Bill for this purpose.

MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL (Oldham): Do I understand that all this increase of expenditure is for Sandhurst and Woolwich?

*MR. BRODRICK said that the expenditure at Sandhurst would be for a larger number of cadets due to the increase of officers, who were now half as many again as they were some years ago.

MR. ARTHUR LEE (Hampshire, Fareham): How much is the increase for Sandhurst?

*MR. BRODRICK said he could not say off-hand. He expected the outlay at Sandhurst would be about £70,000, but he could not say what the increased number of cadets would be inasmuch as that must depend on the accommodation they provided. He wished to say that in this Bill there was no new policy, except the policy of building barracks in South Africa. There was no evasion of the system by which the Estimates were used for repairs and the Loans for new buildings. There was no change in the policy with regard to defence and works, training grounds or rifle ranges; no policy which was not before the Treasury two years ago. With regard to South Africa, generally speaking, he would say that the voting of this sum would not for all time settle the new policy. It had to be remembered that our troops there had been under canvas, some for three and others for nearly four years. That tended neither to good discipline nor to good health. At the close of the war Lord Kitchener advised them that a smaller garrison than 30,000 men should not be left at that time in South Africa, and they were strongly advised by the whole of the military authorities not to allow the troops, if possible, to remain for another winter without shelter over their heads. Therefore, large works must have been undertaken, without any change of policy, simply for the shelter of the troops. Now it had been determined to station a permanent force there. The only difference between the old proposal and the new one was that the permanent force proposed would be 5,000 weaker, but it would be provided with accessories which were not contemplated under the old plan. The old plan was 15,000 men, with accessories, permanent, and 15,000 men, without accessories, temporary. The new force was 25,000 men with accessories, so that the House would see that between the two there was no very large margin. The sum they were now proposing to take for South Africa would enable them to dispense with a considerable number of barracks in this country; they were not duplicating barrack accommodation in what they were building in South Africa.

THE MASTER OF ELIBANK (Edinburgh, Midlothian) asked what had been done with the huts in the concentration camps, which must have cost an enormous sum of money.

*MR. BRODRICK said those huts, which were originally sent out for Army purposes and diverted temporarily to the concentration camps, had been used to the fullest extent they would go. They did not order any more until they had ascertained that the huts were being fully used. But the great expense was not in the actual hutment, but in the enormous price of labour, which they had endeavoured to lessen, as far as they possibly could, by using their own engineers and troops, and by inducing contractors in this country to send out labour on better terms. In conclusion, he submitted there was nothing in the Bill which in any way changed the position which had been taken up by Parliament for some years with regard to these expenses, or to justify any anxiety as to undue extravagance.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.) said that those Members who had opposed the policy of Loan Bills on the grounds so eloquently stated by the hon. Member for Exeter were fully justified by the course of events. Of course, when the policy was initiated, the Government were very careful to put down no item which was open to objection, and for the first few years of this policy the Government, as a rule, confined themselves to items which they could defend. But those who objected to these Loan Bills foresaw, and their anticipations had been fully borne out since, that if this system was accepted, there would be a temptation to the Government to throw on Loan Bills all sorts of items of expenditure that ought properly to appear in the yearly Estimates. The right hon. Gentleman said that this system was conceived and carried out for the purposes of economy; but hon. Members who had taken an opposite view were more than justified by the result, because in all financial measures experience was the ultimate test as to whether they made for economy or not. This system was now adopted as a regular policy, indeed Loan Bills were now as regular as the Estimates themselves, and they were bound to make, not for economy, but for extravagance. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol, whose financial record, at all events, in his speeches, was beyond reproach, was getting somewhat appalled at the rapid growth of the child for which he was responsible; and although the right hon. Gentleman defended this policy, as he was bound to defend it, he admitted frankly he was appalled at the extent to which it had grown. The right hon. Gentleman implored the Government to tell the House that they had now reached the last of these Loan Bills; but the Secretary of State for War did not give any such assurance. On the contrary, he distinctly indicated that they had not reached the last of these Bills; and there was not the slightest hope that the last Loan Bill would be reached until there was a popular uprising against extravagance. The Committee on National Expenditure was astonished at the figures laid before them. In 1893-4 the expenditure under Loan Bills was £1,429,000; in 1898–9 £1,080,000; and in 1900–1 £4,120,000. The Army Loan Bills were in 1893–4 £717,000; in 1898–9 £830,000; and this year £3,450,000. Where was the prospect of finality or improvement in those figures. Expenditure under Loan Bills was rapidly increasing *pari passu* with an enormous increase in the ordinary Estimates; and the country was being deceived as to its real financial position. The Army Estimates had increased over £10,000,000 in five years, which was absolutely without parallel with the whole history of the country. The right hon. Gentleman endeavoured to make out that part of this year's Army Estimates was extraordinary, and that the proper amount should be £30,000,000. As a matter of fact, however, the figure should have been £34,457,000, *plus* £4,520,000, in addition to appropriations-in-aid. When he first entered the House he soon arrived at the conclusion that the one characteristic which made the finances of the country pre-eminent over the finance of any other country, and which had conduced so much to the financial stability and resources of England was, that owing to the work of Sir Robert Peel and Mr. Gladstone, the finance of the country had been brought to such a condition of simplicity that the man in the street could understand it. It was almost the ideal of accounting. Everything went into the Exchequer in one account and was paid out in another; so that where a financial statement was published everyone could see what the country was raising and spending each year.

But this Government, during the last eight or ten years, have steadily undone that work. In the first place, there was the system of interception; and in addition there were special Budgets, in addition to the ordinary Budgets, which had completely deluded the public as to the amount that was being spent on the Army and Navy. Formerly, it was the practice of the Government to bring in a Loan Bill in February, so that the amount could be taken into account when the annual financial statement was discussed. In 1901, however, another descent was made in this career of financial irregularity and recklessness; and the Loan Bill was introduced at the end of the session, when there could be no adequate discussion at all, and when the ordinary financial business of the year had been concluded. He had no doubt there was an object in that great change of policy, namely, that the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the representatives of the Army and Navy should not be embarrassed during the discussion of the Estimates, and that they might be able to force on the House of Commons false and misleading figures. He was glad to have one more opportunity of recording his vote against such a system. There was one item in the Bill to which he particularly objected—viz., the two-and-half millions for permanent barracks in South Africa. He was amazed to hear from the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol, as well as from the Leader of the Opposition, that South Africa was to be called upon to pay for its garrison. Was South Africa consulted in the matter, and if so, what answer was given? The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Bristol said that the settlement and contentment of South Africa would be promoted not only by imposing on her a permanent garrison, and thereby branding her as a conquered country to be held down by military force, but at the same time exacting from her a contribution towards the expense of that garrison. The Government never made a greater mistake in their lives if they imagined that any such measure would bring contentment and peace to South Africa. They would find that they had embarked on a very stormy sea if they endeavoured to impose the cost of the garrison on South Africa. When he first read the proposal his mind was carried back to April, 1899, when he moved a reduction of the Barracks Vote for South Africa, and when the first note of the war was struck. On that occasion the Colonial Secretary, after midnight, made a speech in support of the Vote, which aroused the suspicions of many of them as to the intentions of the Government. The speech was cabled *verbatim* to Pretoria, and no doubt did much to exasperate feeling, and to convey the impression that the Government meant war. He ventured to prophesy now that the determination to keep a garrison in South Africa, and to compel the people to pay for it, would have an effect directly contrary to that hoped for.

* LIEUTENANT - COLONEL GEORGE KEMP (Lancashire, Heywood) said he was somewhat astonished to hear that the 25,000 troops which were to be in South Africa would not be available for use in India. [Mr. BRODRICK dissented.] Was he, then, to understand that these troops would be available, partially, at any rate, for India if required? [Mr. BRODRICK assented.] He was glad to have an opportunity of speaking, because the Bill bore directly on objects which certain of his hon. friends brought before the House when they criticised the military policy of the Government. The original position taken up by the Secretary of State for War, that the three Army Corps were for the defence of England, was abandoned by the Prime Minister.

*MR. BRODRICK said he never laid down that position. The position he took up, and to which he adhered, was the necessity of having three Army Corps in England.

*LIEUT - COLONEL GEORGE KEMP said his misconception of the position was due to the statement of the right hon. Gentleman at the Conference of Colonial Premiers when he said that, in the opinion of his military advisers, the number he put forward was not too great in the event of an invasion. At any rate, the Prime Minister stated that the reason for such a large number of troops in England——

*MR. SPEAKER: It is not in order to refer to speeches made in the same session or debate on another bill or matter.

*LIEUT. - COLONEL GEORGE KEMP said he apologised for his mistake. He wished to know if the force in South Africa were to be available for India, whether the men were to be three years service men or seven years service men. If they were to be three years service men, then the public were being misled.

*MR. SPEAKER: I do not think these observations arise on a Bill to provide barracks.

*LIEUT. - COLONEL GEORGE KEMP said that with due submission to Mr. Speaker's ruling, his point was that if the troops were to be three years service men they would be of no use in India; and that, therefore, he would be justified in opposing a Bill to provide them with barrack accommodation in South Africa.

*MR. SPEAKER: The observations of the hon. Gentleman do not appear to me to be relevant.

*LIEUT. - COLONEL GEORGE KEMP said that if the men were three years service men they could not be sent to India, because the majority of them would be under the age at which men were sent to India. If they were to be sent to India it would be a great change on military policy.

*MR. SPEAKER: That does not arise in the question of providing barracks.

*LIEUT.-COLONEL GEORGE KEMP said that he would be justified in recording his vote against the Bill until they were certain that the barracks would be built for the purpose put forward by the Prime Minister. He had heard with a certain amount of satisfaction that there would be a curtailment of expense in England as a result of building these barracks in South Africa; but the House had not yet been told whether there would be a reduction in the number of Regular troops stationed in England. If they were to have troops in South Africa, there ought to be a corresponding reduction in the number of Regular troops in England. He was fully in favour of having troops in South Africa; it would give them an opportunity for better training, and of becoming more efficient; but he could not vote for barracks in South Africa unless there was to be a corresponding reduction of the number of Regular troops in Great Britain. He thought it was only right to ask now which of the three Army Corps was to be reduced. He hoped he would not be understood as opposing all the items in the Bill. For instance, no hon. Member was more anxious than he was that barracks should be reconstructed and improved; but until he knew what the equivalent reduction in England was to be, he would be compelled with regret to record his vote against the Bill.

Mr. WINSTON CHURCHILL said he would not himself be able to support the Bill. He accepted the assurance that the Bill involved no new policy, for there were many features of the Bill thoroughly in accordance with the very extravagant policy which the War Office had been carrying on for years. While not able to support the Bill, he had a difficulty in opposing it. Mixed up with the items to which he objected were items no one would take the responsibility of preventing the Government from obtaining. He thought that the financial aspect as revealed to-day convinced many hon. Members that the whole position of affairs with regard to the Army was very grave and increasing in gravity. Not only was expenditure increasing, and increasing without any prospect of immediate arrest, not only was the organisation of the Army unsuited to the needs of the country, but side by side with enormous expenditure they had a deterioration in the quality of the troops and a diminution of supply.

*Mr. SPEAKER: This does not arise on the question of barracks.

Mr. WINSTON CHURCHILL said that, with great respect, it was preliminary to some observations he was about to make with reference to the very extensive plan of barracks for which his right hon. friend was asking money.

*Mr. SPEAKER: When the hon. Gentleman comes to those observations he will be in order.

Mr. WINSTON CHURCHILL said that a large part of the money for which his right hon. friend was asking was required for hutments or huts—he did not know the difference—for troops in South Africa. He had no rooted objection to the establishment of a large force in South Africa. It had many advantages in the direction of teaching, training, and colonisation, but to his mind it possessed two great advantages. A large force in South Africa struck at the root of the Army Corps system at home and destroyed the linked battalion system. But the whole question had been much altered by the fact that they had their increase in South Africa and no diminution at home. Everyone knew that the South African scheme was first proposed in a series of articles in *The Times* by a very able writer, who had now unhappily gone wrong on another point; but that scheme consisted of two parts, a larger force in South Africa and a proportionate reduction at home. Many of them were induced to support a large force in South Africa, because they understood that it would carry with it a reduction of at least 25,000 or 27,000 men at home. The arguments in favour of a force in South Africa were very strong; but the difficulties were very great. The difficulties prevailed over the arguments until the Colonial Secretary returned from South Africa. He did not allow the difficulties to stand in his way. Twenty-five thousand men had to be found for South Africa; and the

Colonial Secretary was determined to have his way. While the Colonial Secretary had had his way as regarded the men being sent to South Africa, the extra embarrassment and strain put upon our recruiting system, if there was no corresponding reduction at home, was a parochial matter which did not commend itself to his august attention. As to the contribution from India, while none was exacted from the colonies India was not under the Colonial Office, and that made the difference. His right hon. friend said that the increase in the barrack accommodation was due to the increase in the Army. That was one of his principal objections to the Bill.

The right hon. Gentleman stated that 60,000 men had been added to the Army in the course of the last few years. His right hon. friend the Member for West Bristol asked the right hon. Gentleman if this was to be the end; but the right hon. Gentleman did not say it was. Side by side with the right hon. Gentleman's demand for barrack accommodation there was a deterioration in the quality of the troops and a diminution of supply. [Mr. BRODRICK dissented.] According to the right hon. Gentleman's own statement there was a diminution of 6,000 men during the present year. Apart from that, he would remind his right hon. friend in the presence of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, of the very distinct pledge which had been given by various members of the Government, that there would be a reduction in Army expenditure. He had seen at Aldershot battalion after battalion under strength. Twenty-five battalions had been added to the Army, not all perhaps by his right hon. friend, and no doubt it was largely owing to the addition of those battalions that this loan was necessary. He had already contended that that increase was not justifiable, and the time had now come when a reduction ought to be made. If the number of troops in England was decreased by the number of troops to be sent to South Africa, that would to a large extent adjust the balance. He must remind his right hon. friend in the presence of the Chancellor of the Exchequer of the very distinct pledges that had been given by various members of the Government of a reduction in military expenditure, and of a reduction in the number of the Army when the Reserves have been filled up. He was not there to make accusations against his right hon. friend of having been a thriftless Minister. He knew enough about the Army to know that for a long time he was zealous for economy; but his troubles and the quarrel of some of his supporters with him had arisen from the fact that the right hon. Gentleman had endeavoured recently to form an army on a scale larger than his resources would allow, and he had never been able to catch up with his original mistake. His right hon friend had never been able to make his army a real and honest army; battalions had to pretend to be battalions, Army Corps had to pretend to be Army Corps, and boys had to pretend to be men. In point of fact, his right hon. friend had tried to fill a quart pot when he only had a pint and a half pint with which to do it. The present state of affairs in the Army could not go on indefinitely. In the course of the next few years the whole conditions of Army policy would have to be reconsidered and recast. He hoped it might be wisely done, and that when reaction came against this great expenditure it would not be such as to endanger the safety of the country. He did not attack the courage or the patriotism of his right hon. friend, but he thought he would have shown a higher courage and a more enlightened spirit if, in what might prove to be his last few months of office, he had found it possible to make those reductions in the Army which would free it from the suspicion of pretence.

MR. CUST (Southwark, Bermondsey) said he was opposed to the Bill on the double ground of its extravagance and its futility. In his judgment the War Office had stooped to the lowest depths of meanness in bleeding India for a purpose in which she had no interest. The Government had started experimentally on the very expensive idea of a permanent South African Army, which admittedly increased our military establishment, and now they were face to face with this enormous expenditure on a plan which, he believed, could never be realised, and which, even if it could be, we did not want and could not afford.

This expenditure followed absolutely on the strange scheme of Army Corps organisation, to which the right hon. Gentleman was so much attached. But for the growing increase in the Army this new expenditure would not be wanted. The right hon. Gentleman had said he had only increased the Army by 6,000 men, but during the last six years the Army had been increased by the right hon. Gentleman and his predecessors by 60,000 men. It was no defence for a Ministry which had been in office for fifteen years out of the last eighteen to say they only realised their responsibility three or four years ago. If these barracks were filled with men of high standard they would be a gross and unnecessary extravagance. What if they were not filled, even with "specials" or staff officers? What if they were to be merely memorials of an old-world mania? What if they were only to be what would have been called two generations ago "Brodrick's follies," scattered about the country? To draw an illustration from common life, he would point out that even a rabbit hutch was an extravagance if they had no rabbits to put in it. *A fortiori* barracks were an extravagance if there were no recruits to put in them, and a recruit was a more furtive animal even than a rabbit. Was it worth while to build barracks for an army that was never likely to exist except on paper? The Chancellor of the Exchequer had declared that large reductions in military expenditure must be made, so that by the time these barracks were ready there would be no one to inhabit them. Already they knew that a reduction in the size of the army was practically agreed to. The right hon. Gentleman had indicated so himself, as had also the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who had laid down that a large reduction of expenditure would have to be made. That meant that in two or three years there would be a substantial decrease, and that when these barracks were finished there would be nobody to inhabit them.

*MR. BRODRICK said the barracks in this country were to house the cavalry and artillery, both arms being largely above strength.

MR. CUST: Exactly. It was because the establishment was above strength that new barracks were required. The War Office were adding an imaginary Army Corps which would never exist; they were building enormous barracks for which they could find no inhabitants; and they were piling up a burden of extravagant expenditure which even this country, with its engagements, would not be able to pay.

MAJOR EVANS GORDON (Tower Hamlets, Stepney) said he thought economies might be very well effected in one or two directions, and particularly in regard to these troops. When the Army Corps system was introduced it was with the object of reorganising the defence forces and decentralising the commands as much as possible. But what had happened? So far as he could gather, an Army Corps Staff——

*MR. SPEAKER said the hon. Member appeared to be going into something which was not relevant to this Bill. It would be relevant to argue that there would not be enough soldiers to occupy the barracks, but to go into the organisation of the Army was not relevant.

MAJOR EVANS GORDON said his point was that instead of getting rid of what they had before, the Army Corps system had been superimposed upon the old system.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Lord STANLEY, Lancashire, Westhoughton) pointed out that the "Staff contingencies" were the controlling staffs of the building of the barracks and had nothing to do with Staffs of Army Corps.

MAJOR EVANS GORDON asked, was no provision being made for Staff officers? Was there not, for instance, to be a new Government House on Salisbury Plain?

*MR. SPEAKER said that even if there were the question of the organisation of

Staffs would not be a matter for discussion. The necessity of a large or small Staff did not arise on this Bill.

MAJOR EVANS GORDON said in that case he would conclude his remarks by saying with regard to the army in South Africa he was bound to support that part of the Bill. He had ventured to say on other occasions that if India were in danger the proper place to keep troops was either in India or as near India as possible. He was glad that that principle had now been adopted by the right hon. Gentleman, and he heartily congratulated him on having placed troops in a strategic position, far more safe for the relief of India than they could be if they remained in England. If that were the object in view, this Bill would have his most hearty support.

MR. GUEST (Plymouth) said there was considerable dissatisfaction on all sides of the House at the reply of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War, who had a way of treating this matter very lightly, if one could judge from his facial expression. He thought that the cost of hutting 25,000 men in South Africa could well have been split up and the Government might have taken the amount required to hut 15,000, and that the cost of the remaining 10,000 should have appeared on the next year's Estimates. His great objection to the Bill, however, was the item for the building of barracks in this country. The number of recruits had fallen off, and it had been generally conceded that there must be a considerable reduction in the number of men nominally with the Colours, but no account appeared to have been taken of the reduction in the building scheme. If the noble Lord the Financial Secretary would get up and tell the House that these matters had been taken into account, he was prepared to support the Bill if it went to a division.

LORD STANLEY said it seemed to have been suggested by his hon. friend who had spoken a short time ago that 15,000 men should be in huts and the remaining 10,000 left in their tents. He thought that would not tend to either the health or discipline of the Army. With regard to the general policy, whatever hon. Members below the gangway might say, the House, by a great majority, had approved a certain establishment for the Army, and for that establishment the Government were endeavouring to make provision.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 154; Noes, 53. (Division List, No. 188.)

AYES.

Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hon. Sir H
Bagot, Capt. Josceline Fitzroy
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (*Manch'r*
Balfour, Rt. Hn. G. W. (*Leeds*
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benjamin
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bignold, Arthur
Bigwood, James
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith-
Bousfield, William Robert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brown, Sir Alex. H. (*Shropsh.*)
Bull, William James
Butcher, John George
Campbell, Rt Hn. J. A. (*Glasgow*
Cavendish, V. C. W. (*Derbyshire*
Cecil, Evelyn (*Aston Manor*)
Chamberlain, Rt Hn. J. A (*Worc*
Chapman, Edward
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. T. H. A. E.
Coddington, Sir William
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Collings, Right Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Charles Ready
Colston, Chas. Edw H. Athole
Corbett, A. Cameron (*Glasgow*
Corbett, T. L. (*Down, North*)
Cranborne, Viscount

Cripps, Charles Alfred
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley-
Denny, Colonel
Dickson, Charles Scott
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers
Duke, Henry Edward
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Faber, Edmund B. (*Hants, W.*)
Faber, George Denison (*York*)
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Ed.
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J. (*Man'r*
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Flower, Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Philip S. (*Warwick, S. W*
Gardner, Ernest
Gordon, Hn J. E. (*Elgin and N'rn*
Goschen, Hon. Geo. Joachim
Greene, W. Raymond-(*Cambs.*
Grenfell, William Henry
Gunter, Sir Robert
Guthrie, Walter Murray
Hamilton, Rt Hn Lord G (*Midd'x*
Hamilton, Marq. of (*Londondy*
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, Arthur H. (*Hanley*)
Henderson, Sir Alexander
Hickman, Sir Alfred
Hoult, Joseph
Howard, Jno (*Kent, Faver'hm*
Howard, J. (*Midd., Tott'ham*
Jessel, Capt. Herbert Merton
Johnstone, Heywood
Kenyon, Hon. G. T. (*Denbigh*
Kimber, Henry
Knowles, Lees
Lambton, Hn. Frederick Wm.
Law, Andrew Bonar (*Glasgow*
Lawrence, Sir Jos. (*Monm'th*)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (*Liverpool*)
Lawson, Jn. Grant (*Yorks. N. R*)
Lee, Arthur H. (*Hants, Fareham*
Lees, Sir Elliott (*Birkenhead*)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N. S.
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Long, Rt Hon. Walter (*Bristol, S*
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Francis William
Lowther, C. (*Cumb. Eskdale*)
Lucas, Col. Francis (*Lowestoft*)
Lucas, Reginald J. (*Portsmouth*
Macdona, John Cumming
Maconochie, A. W.
M'Arthur, Charles (*Liverpool*)
Martin, Richard Biddulph
Massey-Mainwaring, Hn. W. F.
Maxwell, Rt Hn Sir H E (*Wigton*
Maxwell, W. J. H. (*Dumfriessh.*
Melville, Beresford Valentine
Mitchell, William (*Burnley*)
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Murray, Rt Hn A. Graham (*Bute*
Murray, Charles J. (*Coventry*)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (*Bath*
Nicholson, William Graham
Percy, Earl
Plummer, Walter R.
Pretyman, Ernest George
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Rasch, Sir Frederic Carne
Rattigan, Sir William Henry
Reid, James (*Greenock*)
Renshaw, Sir Charles Bine
Ridley, S. F. (*Bethnal Green*)
Ritchie, Rt. Hn Chas. Thomson
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford-
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Sandys, Lt.-Col. Thos. Myles
Scott, Sir S. (*Marylebone, W.*)
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Smith, Abel H. (*Hertford, E.*)
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (*Strand*)
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Edward Jas. (*Somerset*
Stanley, Lord (*Lancs.*)
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Stroyan, John
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Talbot, Lord E. (*Chichester*)
Talbot, Rt Hn J. G. (*Oxf'd Univ.*
Taylor, Austin (*East Toxteth*)
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Tufnell, Lieut.-Col. Edward
Valentia, Viscount
Walrond, Rt. Hon. Sir W. H.
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Whiteley, H (*Ashton-und. Lyne*
Williams, Rt Hn J Powell (*Birm*
Willoughby de Eresby, Lord
Wills, Sir Frederick
Wilson, A. S. (*York, E. R.*)
Wilson-Todd, W. H. (*Yorks.*)
Wortley, Rt. Hn. C. B. Stuart

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Allen, Charles P. (*Glouc., Stroud*
Asher, Alexander
Asquith, Rt. Hon. Herbt. Hy.
Atherley-Jones, L.
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Blake, Edward
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Cremer, William Randal
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, M. Vaughan-(*Cardigan*
Dillon, John
Duncan, J. Hastings
Dunn, Sir William
Edwards, Frank
Elibank, Master of
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
Fuller, J. M. F.
Grant, Corrie
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale
Hayter, Rt. Hon. Sir Arthur D.
Horniman, Frederick John
Jones, William (*Carnarvonsh.*
Kemp, Lieut.-Col. George
Labouchere, Henry
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Lough, Thomas
Mappin, Sir Fredk. Thorpe
Mellor, Rt. Hn. John William
Mitchell, Edw. (*Fermanagh N.*
Morgan, J. Lloyd (*Carmarthen*)
Nolan, Col. John P. (*Galway, N.*
Palmer, Sir Charles M. (*Durham*
Partington, Oswald
Pirie, Duncan V.
Reid, Sir R. Threshie (*Dumfries*
Rickett, J. Compton
Robertson, Edmund (*Dundee*)
Robson, William Snowdon
Shackleton, David James
Shipman Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (*Forfarshire*)
Tennant, Harold John
Thomas, David Alfred (*Merthyr*
Thomson, F. W. (*York, W. R.*)
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, Eugene (*Clackmannan*
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wilson, Chas. H. (*Hull, W.*)
Wilson, H. J. (*York, W. R.*)

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Causton and Mr. C. R. Spencer.

Main Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed for Monday next.

POOR PRISONERS' DEFENCE (RE-COMMITTED) BILL.

Considered in Committee, and reported, without Amendment; to be read the third time upon Monday next.

Adjourned at a quarter before Six o'clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Monday, 27th July, 1903.

FAUCONBERG, DARCY (DE KNAYTH), AND MEINILL BARONIES.

Report made from the Committee for Privileges—

That the Barony of Fauconberg is an ancient barony in fee;

That it is proved by the writ of summons addressed to William Nevill in the seventh year of Henry VI., and by the sitting in Parliament of the said William Nevill as Lord Fauconberg in the fourteenth year of Henry VI., and by the other evidence adduced on behalf of the Petitioners, that the Barony of Fauconberg was, in the reign of King Henry VI., vested in William Nevill, in right of his wife Joan;

That on the death of the said Joan in the seventh year of Henry VII., the said Barony of Fauconberg fell into abeyance between James Strangways and William Conyers, afterwards Lord Conyers, the grandsons and co-heirs of the said William Nevill Lord Fauconberg and his said wife;

That the Petitioners Marcia Amelia Mary Countess of Yarborough, Baroness Conyers, and Violet Ida Evelyn Countess of Powis, are now the co-heirs of the said William Lord Conyers;

That the Barony of Fauconberg is at His Majesty's disposal;

That the Barony of Darcy (de Knayth) is an ancient barony in fee;

That it is proved by the Parliament Roll of eighteenth Edward III. and the other evidence adduced on behalf of the Petitioners that John Darcy sat in Paliament in right of that barony in that year;

That the Barony of Darcy (de Knayth) descended to Philip Lord Darcy, at whose death without male issue it fell into abeyance between his two daughters and co-heirs, Margery and Elizabeth;

That the said Margery married Sir John Conyers who was the grandfather of William, first Lord Conyers;

That on the death of John Lord Conyers in 1557, the Barony of Darcy (de Knayth) fell into abeyance between his three daughters, Anne, Elizabeth and Katherine;

That in 1641 the abeyance then existing in the said Barony of Darcy (de Knayth) was determined by Letters Patent in favour of Conyers, Lord Darcy and Lord Conyers;

That the Barony of Darcy (de Knayth) descended in succession to Conyers, Lord Darcy and Lord Conyers, who was created Earl of Holdernesse in the year 1682;

That the Barony of Darcy (de Knayth) again fell into abeyance in the year 1888 and that the Petitioners Marcia Amelia Mary Countess of Yarborough, Baroness Conyers, and Violet Ida Evelyn Countess of Powis are the co-heirs to the said Barony of Darcy (de Knayth);

That the Barony of Darcy (de Knayth) is at His Majesty's disposal;

With respect to the Barony of Meinill, it is not proved to the satisfaction of the Committee that any person ever sat in this House under that title:

Read, and agreed to; and resolved and adjudged accordingly; and Resolution and Judgment to be laid before His Majesty by the Lords with White Staves.

POULETT PEERAGE.

Report made from the Committee of Privileges—

That the Petitioner, William Turnour Thomas Poulett, claiming to be Viscount Hinton of Hinton St. George and Earl Poulett, both in the Peerage of England, hath not made out his claim to the dignities, titles, and honours of Viscount Hinton of Hinton St. George and Earl Poulett—

That the Petitioner, Rosa Countess Poulett, formerly the wife and now the widow of William Henry, sixth Earl Poulett, as a testamentary guardian of her infant son William John Lydston, claiming to be Viscount Hinton of Hinton St. George, in the county of Somerset, and seventh Earl Poulett, both in the Peerage of England, hath made out her claim that the said William John Lydston Poulett should be declared to be by right entitled to the dignities, titles, and honours of

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

Viscount Hinton of Hinton St. George and Earl Poulett.

Read, and agreed to; and resolved and adjudged accordingly; and Resolution and Judgment to be laid before His Majesty by the Lords with White Staves.

POULETT PEERAGE.

Ordered that all deeds, documents, and papers produced on behalf of the claimants by their respective agents be delivered to the said agents, and that the evidence be printed. [No. 177.]

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Ebbw Vale Water Improvement Bill. Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments.

Western Valleys (Monmouthshire) Sewerage Board Bill. Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments.

Stroud and Districts Tramways Bill. Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments.

Bath Corporation Water Bill. Read 3ª, with the Amendments, and passed, and returned to the Commons.

East Ham Improvement Bill. Read 3ª, with the Amendments; further Amendments made; Bill passed, and returned to the Commons.

Dublin, Wicklow, and Wexford Railway Bill. Read 3ª, with the Amendments, and passed, and returned to the Commons.

Taff Vale Railway Bill [H.L.]. Returned from the Commons agreed to.

Bournemouth Corporation Tramways Bill [H.L.]. Returned from the Commons agreed to, with Amendments.

Sutton Coldfield Corporation Bill [H.L.]. Returned from the Commons agreed to, with Amendments: The said Amendments considered and agreed to.

City and South London Railway Bill, Newcastle-upon-Tyne Electric Supply Bill, Romford and District Tramways Bill, Wigan Corporation Tramways Bill, Woolwich Borough Council Bill. Returned from the Commons with the Amendments agreed to.

Carmarthenshire Electric Power Bill [H.L.]. Commons' Amendments considered; one disagreed to; the rest agreed to: A Committee appointed to prepare a reason to be offered to the Commons for the Lords disagreeing to the said Amendment: The Committee to meet forthwith: Report from the Committee of the reason prepared by them; read, and agreed to; and a message sent to the Commons to return the said Bill, with a reason.

Fife Electric Power Bill [H.L.]. Commons' Amendments considered; one disagreed to; the rest agreed to: A Committee appointed to prepare a reason to be offered to the Commons for the Lords disagreeing to the said Amendment: The Committee to meet forthwith: Report from the Committee of the reason prepared by them; read, and agreed to; and a message sent to the Commons to return the said Bill, with a reason.

Strabane and Letterkenny Railway Bill, North Metropolitan Electric Power Supply Bill [H.L.]. Leave given to the Select Committee to adjourn over Tomorrow.

PETITIONS.

INTOXICATING LIQUORS.

Petition against the sale of, on Sundays; of persons signing; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

DECLARATION OF THE SOVEREIGN AGAINST TRANSUBSTANTIATION.

Petition for abrogation of; of persons signing; read, and ordered to lie on the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

TRADE REPORTS, (ANNUAL SERIES).

No. 3042, Germany (Frankfort-on-Main); No. 3043, Persia (Kermanshah); No. 3044, United States (Philippine Islands); No. 3045, China (Wenchow); No. 3046, Japan (Kobe).

COLONIES (ANNUAL).

No. 391, Gambia; Report for 1902.

HISTORICAL MANUSCRIPTS (ROYAL COMMISSION).

Calendar of the manuscripts of the Marquess of Ormonde, K.P., preserved at Kilkenny Castle. New Series, Vol. II.; and report on manuscripts in the Welsh language: Vol. II., Part II., Plas Llan Stephaen, Free Library, Cardiff.

EVICTIONS (IRELAND).

Return of evictions in Ireland for the quarter ended 30th June, 1903.

Presented (by command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

ROYAL BOTANIC GARDENS, KEW.

Rules for the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, in connection with the regulations prescribed by the Parks Regulation Act, 1872.

LAND REGISTRY.

Account of receipts and payments in respect of the land registry, for the year ended 31st March, 1903.

SUPREME COURT OF JUDICATURE (PROBATE, DIVORCE, AND ADMIRALTY DIVISION).

Order relating to the classification and salaries of the clerks in the Admiralty Registry.

HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE AND COURT OF APPEAL, ETC.

Account showing the receipts and expenditure in respect of the High Court of Justice and Court of Appeal during the year ended 31st March, 1903.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

POST OFFICE SITES BILL.

Brought from the Commons and Read 1ª; to be printed; and referred to the Examiners. (No. 178.)

LIGHT RAILWAYS BILL [H.L.].

House in Committee (according to order): Bill reported without Amendment, and recommitted to the Standing Committee.

House adjourned at twenty-five minutes before Five o'clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Monday, 27th July, 1903.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Birmingham Corporation Bill [Lords]; Chatham and District Light Railways Bill [Lords]; Exeter Corporation Bill [Lords]; Willesden Urban District Council Bill [Lords]. Read the third time, and passed, with Amendments.

Chard Corporation Gas and Electricity Bill [Lords]; Gosport and Fareham Tramways Bill [Lords]; Hove, Worthing, and District Tramways Bill [Lords]; Rochester Corporation Tramways and Improvements Bill [Lords]; South Eastern and London, Chatham, and Dover Railways Bill [Lords]. As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

South Western and Isle of Wight Junction Railway Bill [Lords]. Read a second time, and committed.

Wood Green Urban District Council Bill (by Order). Consideration of Lords' Amendments deferred till Thursday.

Rothesay Corporation Order Confirmation Bill; Scottish Episcopal Clergy Widows' and Orphans' Fund Order Confirmation Bill. Read the third time, and passed.

Perth Corporation (Tramways) Order Confirmation Bill [Lords]; Aberdeen Corporation Tramways Order Confirmation Bill [Lords]. Considered; to be read the third time upon Wednesday.

Glasgow Corporation (Police) Order Confirmation Bill [Lords]; Irvine and District Water Board Confirmation Bill [Lords]. Read a second time; to be considered upon Wednesday.

Wick and Pulteney Harbours Order Confirmation. Bill to confirm a Provisional Order under The Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, relating to Wick and Pulteney Harbours, ordered to be brought in by The Lord Advocate and Mr. Solicitor-General for Scotland.

Wick and Pulteney Harbours Order Confirmation Bill. "To confirm a Provisional Order under The Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, relating to Wick and Pulteney Harbours," presented accordingly, and ordered to be considered upon Wednesday.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have agreed to—Neath, Pontardawe, and Brynaman Railway Bill; Mullingar, Kells, and Drogheda Railway Bill; Great Western Railway Bill; Lancashire and Yorkshire and London and North Western Railways (Steam Vessels) Bill, with Amendments.

PETITION.

CHURCH DISCIPLINE BILL.

Petition from Wath upon Dearne, against; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

HISTORICAL MANUSCRIPTS (ROYAL COMMISSION).

Copy presented, of Calendar of the Manuscripts of the Marquess of Ormonde, K.P., preserved at Kilkenny Castle, New Series, Vol. II.; and Report on Manuscripts in the Welsh language, Vol. II., Part II., Plas Llan Stephan; Free Library, Cardiff [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

COUNTY COURTS (PLAINTS AND SITTINGS).

Return presented, relative thereto [Address 10th July; *Mr. Cochrane*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 271.]

EVICTIONS (IRELAND).

Copy presented, of Return of evictions in Ireland for the quarter ended 30th June, 1903 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

ROYAL BOTANIC GARDENS, KEW.

Copy presented, of rules for the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, in connection with the regulations prescribed by The Parks Regulation Act, 1872 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

PUBLIC INCOME AND EXPENDITURE.

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 17th June; *Sir Henry Fowler*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 272.]

LAND REGISTRY.

Account presented, of receipts and payments in respect of the Land Registry for the year ended 31st March, 1903 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 273.]

HIGH COURT OF JUSTICE AND COURT OF APPEAL, ETC.

Copy presented, of account showing the receipts and expenditure in respect of the High Court of Justice and the Court of Appeal during the year ended 31st March, 1903 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 274.]

SUPREME COURT OF JUDICATURE (PROBATE, DIVORCE, AND ADMIRALTY DIVISION).

Copy presented, of order relating to the classification and salaries of the clerks in the Admiralty Registry [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

COLONIAL REPORTS (ANNUAL).

Copy presented, of Colonial Report, No. 391 (Gambia, Annual Report for 1902) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

Paper laid upon the Table by the Clerk of the House:—

ROYAL UNIVERSITY OF IRELAND.

Copy of account of receipts and expenditure of the Royal University of Ireland for the year ended 31st March, 1903, together with the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor-General thereon [by Act]; to be printed. [No. 275.]

POOR RELIEF (ENGLAND AND WALES).

Copy ordered, "of statement of the amount expended by Boards of Guardians for In-maintenance and Outdoor

Relief in England and Wales during the half-year ended Lady Day, 1903; and similar statement for the half-year ending Michaelmas, 1903." — (*Mr. Grant Lawson.*)

MERCHANT SHIPPING, 1902.

Copy ordered, "of tables showing the progress of Merchant Shipping in the United Kingdom and the principal maritime countries." — (*Mr. Gerald Balfour.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Delay in Fixing Fair Rent on Beresford Estate, County Fermanagh.

MR. JORDAN (Fermanagh, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, if he can state why the land case of Bernard McKenna, of Carrickaleece, on the Beresford estate, county Fermanagh, for which he served notice to have a fair rent fixed on 13th December, 1900, has not yet been listed for hearing; while other cases on the same estate, of which notice to fix rent was given in October 1902, have been heard by the Sub-Commission.

(*Answered by Mr. Atkinson.*) I am informed that McKenna's application was only received in the office of the Land Commission on the 30th April last, and not in December 1900. This application will be listed for hearing in due course.

Land under Cultivation in Great Britain about the Year 1825 and To-day.

MR. D. A. THOMAS (Merthyr Tydvil): To ask the hon. Member for North Huntingdonshire, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, if he has any official information showing the quantity of land under cultivation in Great Britain in the earlier part of the last century, say about 1825, and distinguishing between arable and pasture; whether the figures furnished by Mr. William Couling to the Select Committee on Emigration in 1827, giving the arable and pasture land at that time at 13,637,000 and 20,376,000 statute acres respectively may be taken as substantially correct; and how those figures compare with corresponding figures at the present time.

(*Answered by Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes.*) The figures furnished by Mr. Couling to the Select Committee on Emigration were estimates based on his personal knowledge and inquiries as to the extent to which the surface of the United Kingdom was cultivated or otherwise, but the Board have no means of knowing how far they were correct. Mr. Couling's figures of pasture possibly included some pasture land which would now be included with mountain and heath. The Returns obtained for the year 1902 are as follows: — Arable, 15,581,000 acres; Permanent Pasture, 16,807,000 acres; Total 32,388,000 acres.

Deferred Pay—Case of Private Andrew Coffey.

MR. J. P. FARRELL (Longford, N.): To ask the Secretary of State for War, whether his attention has been called to the case of Private Andrew Coffey, No. 3,028, Rifle Brigade, who served seven years with the Colours, including two years in the late South African War, and was discharged from the Army, and refused his deferred pay of 2d. a day amounting to £16; and, if so, whether, seeing that this man for his services in the field has just been awarded the South African Medal he will order that the £16 be paid to Coffey forthwith.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*) This man was discharged as incorrigible and worthless, and therefore forfeited his deferred pay. The medal appears to have been issued in error, and further inquiries have been made on this point.

Attempted Eviction of Mrs. M'Quillan of Collon.

MR. NOLAN (Louth, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, if his attention has been called to the circumstances attending the attempted eviction of Mrs. M'Quillan, at Collon, by Lord Massereene last week; and whether, seeing that she had paid a year's rent every year for the last twelve years, he will consider whether, in view of the coming Purchase Bill, any representations could be made to the landlord to prevent the woman, who is in ill-health, being dispossessed.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) I am informed that the eviction was not carried out on the 10th instant, because a medical certificate was produced to the Sheriff that the woman was too ill to be removed. The police have been informed by the agent of the property that arrears of rent amounting to £84 10s. are due by her at the present date. The Sheriff will not execute the decree of ejectment until the woman can be removed with safety.

Foreign Trawlers in Dingle Bay.

MR. THOMAS O'DONNELL (Kerry, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether, during the inquiry regarding the misconduct of foreign steam trawlers in Dingle Bay in June last, the crew of the boat which was chased and was in danger of being run down were consulted; and, if not, whether further inquiries will be made and steps taken to punish the offending boats, and to prevent a repetition of their offence.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) The crew of the boat in question were not, I am informed, consulted, but the inspector had before him the written statement of the master of the boat. As I have already stated, the Department, upon a consideration of the facts elicited by the inspector, did not consider that the evidence forthcoming would sustain a prosecution for illegal trawling on the occasion. If, however, the hon. Member is in a position to supply me with fresh facts in the case I shall be happy to communicate them to the Department.

Rathdrum Union—Erection of Cottages by Mr. Hallowes.

MR. JAMES O'CONNOR (Wicklow, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that on the 3rd of June 1902, after a sworn inquiry had been held at Rathdrum Union, a Provisional Order was issued by the Irish Local Government Board requiring the Rev. Mr. Hallowes, of Arklow, to build and complete a labourer's cottage within twelve months; and, if so, in view of the fact that the Order has not been complied with, will he say what action the Local Government Board proposes to take in the matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) The Rev. Mr. Hallowes undertook to erect a cottage at his own expense on the site proposed to be taken by the District Council. The Provisional Order, which became absolute on the 19th August 1902, authorised the Council to take the plot compulsorily and to erect a cottage on it if, within twelve months from that date, the owner failed to give effect to his undertaking. The period of twelve months will expire on the 19th proximo, when it will be open to the District Council to exercise the powers conferred upon it by the Provisional Order should the owner have failed to fulfil his undertaking.

Naas Rural District—Delay in holding Local Inquiry.

MR. JAMES O'CONNOR: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can explain the cause of the delay on the part of the Local Government Board in holding a local inquiry into the improvement scheme under the Labourers' Acts passed by the Naas (No. 2) Rural District Council on the 3rd of January last, the petition for the inquiry having been signed on the 2nd of May.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*). The Local Government Board have not received the scheme referred to, nor any documents connected with it. Consequently they are not in a position to hold an inquiry. The Board will communicate with the District Council on the subject.

Kerry County Council and Direct Labour.

MR. FLAVIN (Kerry, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the Local Government Board have rejected the direct labour scheme recommended by the Kerry County Council; and whether, seeing that the scheme of the County Council only embraced two public roads in each Rural District Council as a test experiment in order to ascertain the cost of upkeep, that the labourers of the county asked for and are in favour of the scheme, and that there are a number of agricultural labourers in the county whose average weekly wage when employed does not exceed 9s. per week, he will recommend the Local Government Board to reconsider the County Council scheme with the object of allowing unemployed labour to be used, and the cost of direct labour to be ascertained by the County Council.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) The Rural District Councils of Dingle and Tralee appealed against the direct labour scheme of the County Council, and the Local Government Board, after the local inquiry, allowed the appeal. There were two serious objections to the scheme, namely, the heavy additional cost which it would entail as compared with the existing system (being from 72 to 84 per cent. over the contract system) and the difficulty which, in the opinion of the county surveyor, would be experienced in obtaining labourers to carry out the scheme. The Board have informed the County Council that it is open to them to formulate another scheme.

London Traffic Commission.

SIR THOMAS DEWAR (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he can say when the Royal Commission on London Traffic expect to complete their labours.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers Douglas.*) I am informed by the Chairman of this Commission that the magnitude of the questions into which they are inquiring is such that it is not possible for him to say when it is probable that the Commission will report, but that the work of the Commission is being pushed forward with all possible expedition.

Petition of Dockyard Labourers.

MR. KEARLEY (Devonport): To ask the Civil Lord of the Admiralty if he will say why no reply has yet been circulated to the labourers in His Majesty's Dockyards in answer to their petition of 1902, and when such may be expected.

(*Answered by Mr. Pretyman.*) The decision has not yet been communicated owing to the great number and variety of points which have had to be taken into consideration, but it is anticipated that this will now be done at a very early date.

Grain Duties in Canada and Australia.

SIR CHARLES RENSHAW (Renfrewshire, W.): To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether any, and, if so, what duties are charged in Canada and Australia on the imports of grain and flour from the United Kingdom.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) The answer is in the affirmative. The duties are stated in detail on pages 217, 218, 221, and 223 of the Return of Colonial Import Duties published by the Board of Trade [C. 1356, of 1902].

Exports of Machinery to Canada and Australia.

SIR CHARLES RENSHAW: To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he can state the value of the exports of machinery and mill work, including steam engines and locomotives, from this country to Canada and Australia respectively in the year 1902, and what nett duty after deducting any preferential allowance was charged in that year on the various classes of machinery imported into Canada and Australia.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) The exports of machinery and mill-work, including steam engines and locomotives, from the United Kingdom to Canada and Australia during 1902 were as follows:—

Colony.	Domestic Exports.	Foreign Exports.	Total Exports.
	£	£	£
Canada - -	134,943	5,463	140,406
Australia -	1,414,013	58,987	1,473,000

Many classes of machinery are admitted into Canada and Australia duty free. On other classes of machinery of British production the nett duties in Canada vary from 6⅔ per cent. to 23⅓ per cent. *ad valorem*, and in Australia from 12½ per cent. to 20 per cent. The hon. Member will find a detailed statement of the duties in the Colonial Import Duties Return published by the Board of Trade.

Imports of Food from the Colonies and Foreign Countries.

MR. SEELY (Lincoln): To ask the President of the Board of Trade what are the total annual imports of food only into the United Kingdom from British colonies and foreign countries, respectively.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) I will see what information can be supplied to the hon. Member as to the imports of food only if he will be good enough to specify the articles which he thinks should be excluded, as being articles of drink. Perhaps he will consider such cases as condensed milk, tea, coffee, and ice.

Questions on Trade and Commerce, etc., Pressure on Board of Trade Staff.

SIR JOHN COLOMB (Great Yarmouth): To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether, in view of the increase of work thrown recently upon the staff of the statistical branch of his Department, due to an unusual demand, by Questions in the House and otherwise, for information concerning trade and commerce, he anticipates that the strain on that branch is likely to continue; and, if so, what steps, if any, it is proposed to take to relieve it.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) The strain imposed upon the Board of Trade has been, and continues to be, very heavy. Quite apart from the pressure involved in answering Questions and making Returns relating to fiscal matters the normal work of the commercial Department has largely increased. Much of the work will no doubt be permanent, and I am taking steps to enlarge the staff of the Department.

Imports above £5,000 into the Colonies from Foreign Countries in 1902.

MR. PARTINGTON (Derbyshire, High Peak): To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he can furnish a Return specifying the principal articles, where the total exceeds £5,000, imported into our self-governing colonies from foreign countries for the year 1902.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) A Return shall be prepared showing, for the last available year, the imports from foreign countries into the self-governing colonies, India, and the principal Crown colonies, distinguishing (*a*) principal articles, and (*b*) imports of food, raw materials, and manufactured articles. This Return will cover that already promised to the hon. Member, and it will afford materials from which any hon. Member can arrive for himself at the total value of the imports of articles which, in his opinion, cannot be supplied from the United Kingdom.

Cable Rates to Sydney—Allocation of Cost to the Various Companies.

SIR EDWARD SASSOON (Hythe): To ask the Postmaster-General if he will state in what proportions the rate of 3s. per word charged for a telegram from London to Sydney, via the Pacific cable, is divided up; how much of this sum is payable to the British Post and Telegraph Department, the Atlantic Cable Company carrying the message, the land lines in North America, the Pacific Cable Account, and the Government of New South Wales, respectively; whether such a message in its transit across North America passes only over Canadian land lines; or if, for a part of the way, land lines through the United States are employed, what proportion of the 3s. is paid for transit over these; will he say, further, whether the service indications on such messages are charged for by the Atlantic Cable Companies; and, if so, what proportion of the cost does such charge amount to on a message of say five words from London to Sydney; and whether all unrouted messages from Great Britain and Ireland, destined for Australia, handed in at a Government telegraph office, are preferentially passed on to one of the pooled Atlantic Cable Companies; and, if so, to which.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) The sum of 3s. charged on a telegram from this country to Sydney is divided as follows:—Atlantic Cable Company, 8d.; land lines in North America, 4d; Pacific Cable Board, 1s. 7d.; Australian Government, 5d. Out of the sum of 8d. accruing to the Atlantic Cable Companies the Post Office is paid the ordinary inland rate in respect of such telegrams as are dealt with at postal telegraph offices. In respect of telegrams dealt with entirely by the companies no payment is made to the Post Office beyond the rent which the companies pay for the use of their special wires. Under normal circumstances the transit of the Pacific Cable telegrams is affected only over Canadian territory. The Atlantic Cable Companies at present charge 1s. for the transmission in the service instructions of the date of a telegram and time of handing in, that is, one-fifteenth of the cost of a five-word telegram. All unrouted telegrams from this country to Australia handed in at postal telegraph offices are divided between the Anglo-American and direct United States Cable Companies and the Commercial Cable Company.

Appointment of Staff Officers in India.

MR. PIRIE (Aberdeen, N): To ask the Secretary of State for India whether, in view of the practice, by which the General Officers Commanding the Madras, Bombay, and Punjaub Frontier Army Corps have hitherto selected officers for the staff and other appointments in their commands, having been abolished, and this function having been placed entirely in the hands of the Commander-in-Chief in India, who, together with his military secretary, have had no previous experience of that country or personal knowledge of officers serving there in the British and Native Armies, he will, with the view of conforming with the principles of decentralisation and of giving individual responsibility and authority to the largest possible number of superior officers, further consider the matter.

(*Answered by Secretary Lord George Hamilton.*) I am not aware what is the practice to which the hon. Member refers. When the Presidential Army system was abolished as long ago as 1894 the power of appointing officers to the higher staff appointments was necessarily transferred to the Commander-in-Chief, India, because these appointments are held by officers of high rank selected from the whole of India. But all the lower staff appointments, from Deputy Assistant Adjutant-General and Deputy Assistant Quartermaster-General at command headquarters downwards, are still made by the Lieutenant-Generals of the various commands. A classified list of staff appointments, together with the name of the sanctioning authority in each case, will be found in Army Regulations, India, Vol. II., Part A, Paragraph 239, and, as at present advised, I see no reason for modifying it.

Indentured Indian Labour in African Colonies.

SIR MANCHERJEE BHOWNAGGREE (Bethnal Green, N.E.): To ask the Secretary of State for India if the consideration of the Report by the Government of India on the subject of permitting indentured Indian labour for the African Colonies is completed, and, if so, what conditions are agreed upon; and further, in case of any difference of opinion existing regarding the conditions between the Government of India and the African colonial authorities, will he state what course he intends to pursue.

(*Answered by Secretary Lord George Hamilton.*) I am not aware of any Report by the Government of India on the subject of Indian labour in the South African Colonies, but, as I stated in this House on the 10th of June, † communications have passed between this country and India on the matter. No arrangements, however, have as yet been made. If a difference of opinion should arise between the Indian and South African authorities the course taken by the Government must depend on the nature of the difference.

Food Produced and Consumed in United Kingdom.

MR. SEELY: To ask the hon. Member for North Huntingdonshire, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, if he can give any estimate of the total annual value of food produced in the United Kingdom and consumed by the population at home.

(*Answered by Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes.*) I am afraid I am not better able than my right hon. friend the President of the

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxxiii., 448.

Board of Trade, to whom the hon. Member recently addressed a similar Question,† to make any estimate of any value of the total annual supply of food produced and consumed in the United Kingdom.

Increase of Vagrancy in Denbigh.

MR. GEORGE KENYON (Denbigh): To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been called to the increase in the number of vagrants relieved in the Wrexham and other unions in the county of Denbigh; and, if so, whether he will introduce a measure giving more stringent powers to the guardians in dealing with vagrants.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) My hon. friend has furnished me with a statement showing that there has been an increase in the total number of vagrants relieved in the unions referred to during the last two years, though in the previous two years the number had decreased. The subject of the treatment of vagrants is under my consideration, but I cannot at present state what action it will be found desirable to take in the matter.

Rathmullen as a Training Station.

MR. O'DOHERTY (Donegal, N.): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether Rathmullen, Lough Swilly, is still retained on the Admiralty List as a station for a training ship; if so, what is the name of the vessel assigned to the station, and why has she not been there for the past two months.

(*Answered by Mr. Arnold-Forster.*) The hon. Member appears to be under a misapprehension, as there never has been a training ship stationed at Rathmullen, Lough Swilly. A coastguard ship was stationed there until recently, but she is now, with the other coastguard ships, included in the Home Fleet.

Painting of Somerset House.

SIR HERBERT MAXWELL (Wigtonshire): To ask the hon. Member for West Derbyshire, as representing the First Commissioner of Works, whether it is in accordance with instructions from the Office of Works that the vases and stonework on the river front of Somerset House are being painted white; how far it is proposed to carry the painting; and whether he has considered he effect of coating good Portland stone with white lead.

(*Answered by Mr. Victor Cavendish.*) Not a particle of stonework has been painted, therefore the question of the effect of white lead paint on Portland stone does not arise. The pediment and enrichments, together with the lower part of the dome, are of stucco and wood (almost entirely the latter). This work has probably been painted during the whole time of its existence. The vases are of a clay composition and have also always been painted, as is evidenced by the fact that the old coats of paint are from one-sixteenth to one-eighth of an inch thick.

German Exports to Countries outside Europe.

MR. SEELY: To ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs if he can give the exports from Germany to countries outside Europe for the years 1882, 1892, and 1902.

(*Answered by Lord Cranborne.*) The published statistics of German exports do not admit of an exact separation between those destined for European and for non-European countries, owing to the fact that exports to the extra European portion of the Russian and Turkish Empires, to Algeria and Tunis, to the Azores and Madeira, and to Spanish possessions in Africa are not separately distinguished. The value of the exports of German produce and manufactures to extra European countries other than those mentioned is stated to have been £13,419,000 in 1882; £34,286,000 in 1892; and £47,892,000 in 1901. The figures for 1902 are not yet available.

Yield of Income Tax per penny.

MR. HUMPHREYS-OWEN (Montgomeryshire): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if he can state the yield per penny of the income tax for the financial years 1872–3, 1882–3, 1892–3, and 1902–3.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxxv., 1434.

(*Answered by Mr. Ritchie.*) 1872–3, £1,741,088; 1882–3, £1,962,871; 1892–3, £2,239,856; 1902–3, £2,580,000 estimated. It should be borne in mind that the yield per penny in the later years mentioned has been less than it would have been on the basis of 1872–3 by reason of the extensions of relief given in 1875, in 1894, and in 1898.

Repair of Residences of National School Teachers Damaged by Storm.

SIR THOMAS ESMONDE (Wexford, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if the Government propose to find the money for the repairs of the damage done to the residences of national school teachers in Ireland by the storm of February last, in view of the fact that the Board of Works and the Commissioners of National Education in Ireland state that they have no funds available for that purpose.

(*Answered by Mr. Atkinson.*) Residences vested in the Commissioners of National Education are kept in repair by the Board of Works at the expense of the State. The repair of residences which are not the property of the State but are vested in trustees or are the property of private individuals rests with the owners. The Government could not provide funds for the repair of residences of the latter class without legislation involving a modification of the National School Teachers' Residences (Ireland) Act, 1875. The Government cannot undertake to introduce such legislation.

Suggested Fish-curing Station at Rathmullen.

MR. O'DOHERTY: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in view of the quantities of fish at present being caught along the Fannett Coast of Lough Swilly, the Congested Districts Board will consider the advisability of establishing a curing station at Rathmullen, and of inducing some fish buyers to go there, as has been done by them in other parts of the country.

(*Answered by Mr. Atkinson.*) The Congested Districts Board is making inquiry into this matter. Perhaps the hon. Member will repeat the Question in the course of a week.

Physical Examination of Army Candidates in Dublin and Edinburgh.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether, having regard to the fact that at present the successful candidates for admission to both Woolwich and Sandhurst are required to present themselves in London for medical examination as to their physical fitness, with the view to the lessening of the expenses of successful candidates resident in Ireland and Scotland, arrangements can be made for allowing them to present themselves for the medical examination in Dublin or Edinburgh.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*) It is considered to be in the best interests of the candidates that they should be examined by the same Medical Board rather than by two or three Boards, especially in view of the fact that in cases of appeal the Board can only be held in London.

Maryborough Heath Rifle Range.

MR. KENNEDY (Westmeath, N.): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that the butts on the rifle range on Maryborough Heath, now used by a brigade of Irish Militia, are constructed of a concrete wall, earthworks, and iron mantlets which cover the markers who work the targets; and, if so, can he say whether those butts are bullet-proof and afford protection to the superintending officer moving from one target to another during firing.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*) The butts are constructed as stated, and are bullet-proof for markers, but do not afford protection for officers moving from butt to butt during firing. This matter is receiving attention, and meanwhile, firing has to be stopped when the officers want to pass from one butt to another.

Composition of War Office Promotion and Selection Boards.

MR. PIRIE: To ask the Secretary of State for War will he state the composition of the War Office Promotion

Board and the War Office Selection Board for employment of officers.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*) The Promotion Board consists of Army Corps Commanders, and in addition two General Officers for each of the four arms—Cavalry, Infantry, Artillery, and Engineers. The Selection Board consists of the Commander-in-Chief, Adjutant-General, Quartermaster-General, Director-General of Ordnance, Director-General of Mobilisation and Intelligence, Military Secretary, Inspector-General of Fortifications, Director of Military Education and Training. The Inspector-General of Cavalry and Directors-General of Army Medical Staff and Army Veterinary Department are called in with regard to questions affecting their branches.

Accommodation for 2nd Brigade, 3rd Division, of 1st Army Corps.

MR. PIRIE: To ask the Secretary of State for War what arrangements have been made for the future accommodation of the 2nd Brigade, 3rd Division, of the 1st Army Corps; and when do the contracts provide for such being finished.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*) No work in connection with this Brigade can be undertaken under the present loan. Quarters already exist, or are in process of construction, for all the infantry battalions which it is proposed to quarter in this country.

Addition to Indian Military Expenditure—Concurrence of Lord Roberts.

SIR MANCHERJEE BHOWNAGGREE: To ask the Secretary of State for War whether the decision of the War Office imposing an annual addition of £786,000 to the cost of British troops maintained in India, in consequence of the increase in the pay of the British soldier, was concurred in by the Commander-in-Chief, Field-Marshal Lord Roberts.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*) The reply is in the affirmative.

Army Corps Commanders—Responsibility for Fortresses and Defended Ports.

SIR JOHN COLOMB: To ask the Secretary of State for War whether the commanders of Army Corps are responsible for and control the garrisons and all the arrangements of the fortresses and defended ports situate within the area of their respective commands.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*) The reply is in the affirmative.

Public Works Loan Commissioners and Volunteer Corps.

MR. MELLOR (Yorkshire, W.R., Sowerby): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that the Public Works Loan Commissioners decline to give any particulars of the fees charged by them to Volunteer Corps in respect of loans for the purpose of acquiring drill halls or other premises for the use of the corps, and that in a recent case of the headquarters at Reading of the 1st Volunteer Battalion Berkshire Regiment, their fees amounted to £14 3s. 6d. on a loan of £2,017; and, if so, will he say whether he has sanctioned the action of the Commissioners, and in particular of any profit costs being included in the fees charged to His Majesty's Forces by a Public Department in excess of the actual expense of the work done and the stamp; and, if not, whether he will make representations to the Commissioners in the interest of the Volunteer Forces.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*) The Public Works Loan Commissioners are not amenable to the War Office, but to the Treasury, to whom I would ask that the Question should be addressed.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Salisbury Plain.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL (Donegal, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he will state the price asked by Sir Edward Antrobus for the tract of land on Salisbury Plain for which the War Office is negotiating; and whether, in view of the purchases of land recently made at Salisbury Plain, he will reconsider the advisability of delaying for the present further expenditure of this kind.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Lord STANLEY, Lancashire, Westhoughton) rose to answer the Question, but——

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I do not ask it in the absence of the Secretary for War.

*MR. SPEAKER: It is quite common and regular for one Minister to answer a Question on behalf of another Minister.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: Yes, but this is a Question affecting policy, and as the noble Lord is not a member of the Cabinet he should not answer it.

LORD STANLEY: The hon. Gentleman is mistaken. This is not a Question affecting policy. The War Department is not at present contemplating any further purchase on Salisbury Plain.

Official Account of the South African War.

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if the official account of the South African War is being written with reasonable despatch; and will it be a full and complete record, useful to students of military history and tactics.

LORD STANLEY: Steady progress is being made with this work, which is intended to be a record of the South African War which will be useful to students.

Delamere Camp.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that 170 Roman Catholic soldiers now stationed in the camp at Delamere, near Northwich, are deprived of the means of attending the services of the Roman Catholic Church, although the Roman Catholic Rector of Northwich has offered to conduct services in the camp; and, if so, will he state whether the War Office has any control over the discretion of the Commanding Officer in this matter; and, if so, will that control be exercised.

LORD STANLEY: As I have already explained to the hon. Member,† the control over the Commanding Officer's discretion lies with the General Officer Commanding the district, to whom the hon. Member should refer.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: Does the noble Lord know what occurred in the camp yesterday? I postponed this Question at the request of the Secretary for War.

LORD STANLEY: The hon. Member is again mistaken. I am not aware what took place in the camp yesterday.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: Then you ought to know.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. Member really must restrain himself. He has no right to comment in that improper way.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I only did so in consequence of the tone of the noble Lord.

Subsequently,

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL said, in reference to this Question may I make a personal observation—or rather explanation. Last Wednesday I wrote to the Secretary for War on this matter, and he replied asking me to put the Question in due course. I said I would do so, and now, when on the floor of the House I state what occurred, the noble Lord flatly contradicts me. I cannot allow anything that I say on my own personal knowledge to be contradicted.

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member was correct when he began by saying he was going to make a personal "observation."

Navy Pensions—Chief Petty Officers' Grievance.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he is aware that there are several chief petty officers now on the Pension List who have been pensioned on a scale of rating inferior to the position they held when pensioned off; and, seeing that they are the only class of officers in the Royal Navy that have not received pensions according to their rank, whether the recent Admiralty Order granting chief petty officers pensions according to their rank from the 1st April last will be made retrospective so as to include the men already on the Pension List who have for years been under the conditions mentioned.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxxv., 1443.

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER, Belfast, W.): The Admiralty are aware that there are a large number of chief petty officers now on the Pension List who, having been pensioned before the 1st April last, receive pensions calculated on the lower scale in force before that date, but, as I have stated on former occasions, it has been decided that it is not practicable to make the new regulations retrospective.

Transvaal Labour Commission.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether, in the inquiries of the Transvaal Labour Commission, other interests besides those of the mining industries will be adequately represented.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN, Birmingham, W.): The members include representatives of the Johannesburg Town Council, Chamber of Trade, and Trades Council, as well as of the Transvaal Miners Association, and a Dutch member of the Legislative Council who was an influential landrost in the North-West of the Transvaal.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE: And is there nobody specially representing native interests?

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I have given the right hon. Gentleman all the information I can.

France and Nigeria.

MR. ROSE (Cambridgeshire, Newmarket): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if he can say if any use is being made of the two stations leased to the French Government on the Niger, under the treaty of June, 1898; what quantity of merchandise has been received; and whether the French authorities on the spot have found it practicable to have such merchandise as has been received transhipped in accordance with the conditions of the lease.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: The French Government have made, and continue to make, use of the pieces of land on the Niger leased to them under the Convention of the 14th of June, 1898. It is not possible to state, without calling for special Returns, the quantity of goods which have been received on the concession. The leases contain no special conditions as to the transhipment.

Transvaal Contribution Loan.

MR. ROSE: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if he can state whether, in the undertaking given by the financial groups to underwrite the first £10,000,000 of the £30,000,000 Transvaal Contribution Loan, any limit of time, either as to issue of the loan or payment by them, is included in their underwriting guarantee.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: It is agreed that the guarantee cannot be called on before January, 1904, but otherwise there is no definite stipulation. The exact form of guarantee cannot be fixed until it is possible to forecast with some certainty the date of the issue of the first instalment.

Fiji Inquiry.

MR. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if in the inquiry on which the Governor of Fiji is engaged due protection will be afforded to any natives giving evidence; and if the result of the inquiry will be laid upon the Table of the House.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: The Governor of Fiji has been steadily pursuing his inquiries since he assumed the government more than ten months ago, and I am not aware of anything that has happened to justify the imputation that either natives or Europeans who may give him information require protection. Papers will be laid in due course when matters have further advanced.

MR. CATHCART WASON: Is it not the case that some have been imprisoned?

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I think the hon. Gentleman's information is incorrect.

MR. CATHCART WASON: Will the right hon. Gentleman further inquire?

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I am inquiring all the time.

Service in Unhealthy Climates—Case of Mr. A. L. M. Mitchell.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether his attention has been directed to the case of Mr. A. L. M. Mitchell, who having served from 1888 to 1902 in the employ of the Colonial Office in West Africa and British Honduras was, on the suppression of his last post of inspector commanding the British Honduras Constabulary, appointed to the Straits Settlement Police, but was not permitted to take up the position owing to ill-health, the result of his service in West Africa; and, if so, will he say whether this gentleman will be re-employed or receive any pension or gratuity for his service in unhealthy climates under the Colonial Office.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: Mr. Mitchell has received the gratuity to which he was entitled on the abolition of his post in British Honduras. The circumstances under which he left West Africa were not such as to entitle him to pension or gratuity in respect of his service there. He was offered the appointment of assistant-superintendent of police in the Straits Settlements, and accepted the post, but was unable to take it up owing to ill-health. His wishes for re-employment on the occurrence of suitable vacancies will not be overlooked, but it is impossible to make any definite promise on the subject.

Presents from Indian Princes.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India whether, in view of the fact that the Governor-General of India has obtained from the Maharajah of Benares a suite of ivory furniture presented to a former Maharajah by the British Government for services rendered in the Indian Mutiny, and which has been regarded as an heirloom in the Maharajah's family, and that in exchange for this gift the Governor-General gave the Maharajah a rifle of the value of about twenty guineas, he will state whether this furniture, which was sent from Benares to Calcutta by the Maharajah at his own expense to Lord Curzon at Calcutta, was, in accordance with practice, deposited in the Tosha Khana or Treasure House, and after a time sold in accordance with law by auction, the proceeds being credited to the British Treasury, or is in the possession of Lord Curzon; and, if it is still in the possession of Lord Curzon, or if it was presented to him by the Maharajah, not spontaneously, but owing to suggestion, will it be immediately restored to its former owner.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): I have ascertained the following facts from the Viceroy. The ivory furniture in question, which was said to have belonged to a former British resident, was lying in an unoccupied house in a very dilapidated condition. The Viceroy, having ascertained that the Maharajah took no interest in it, offered to buy it. The Maharajah declined the offer and said he would present it, but the Viceroy explained that according to Tosha Khana rules he could not accept a present. Having ascertained that the Maharajah, who was fond of sporting weapons, would like a first-rate rifle, the Viceroy ordered one at a cost of £81, which he exchanged for the furniture. The furniture, after it had been restored at a cost of £30 by the Viceroy, was valued by an expert as worth £100.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: And where is it now?

*LORD GEORGE HAMILTON was understood to say that it belonged to the Viceroy.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL complained that his former Question on this subject had been suppressed by the Press.

Kishineff Massacres.

MR. COHEN (Islington, E.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether His Majesty's Government will obtain from His Majesty's Consul at Odessa a Report whether any, and, if so, what punishment has been awarded to the authors of the Kishineff massacres.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Lord CRANBORNE, Rochester): His Majesty's Consul-General at Odessa has been instructed to furnish a Report on the subject.

Brussels Permanent Commission.

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether any further Papers will be furnished as to the recent proceedings of the Permanent Commission, established under Article VII. of the Brussels Sugar Convention; and what is the rate of surtax in the United States which is to be provisionally adopted by contracting States.

LORD CRANBORNE: We have not yet received the records of the proceedings at the two last meetings of the Commission. As soon as these are received copies of the proceedings will be placed in the library of the House. The rate of the countervailing duty in the United States is that fixed by the United States Treasury as being the equivalent of the bounty granted in the country of origin.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): Is it not the fact that the Government do not propose to adopt the recommendation of the Commission as to the imposition of the United States surtax?

LORD CRANBORNE: I must ask for notice of that.

MR. LOUGH: May I ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he does not think that the discussion on this Bill should be postponed until we have the Report of the proceedings and the particulars of the countervailing duties.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): No, Sir.

The English Benedictines at Douai.

LORD EDMUND TALBOT (Sussex, Chichester): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether the correspondence between His Majesty's Government and the French Government, relating to the English Benedictines at Douai, will be laid upon the Table.

LORD CRANBORNE: In reply to the noble Lord's first Question, I have to say that Papers will be laid. With regard to the additional Paper which the noble Lord speaks of, I will do my utmost to satisfy him; but I cannot answer quite off-hand.

MR. AUSTIN TAYLOR (Liverpool, East Toxteth): Will the noble Lord also include any correspondence relating to the general legislation of the French Government in respect to these Orders, which was the subject of his criticisms last week.

LORD CRANBORNE: I do not think that really arises on the Question. I must ask the hon. Member for notice.

Commercial Convention with Persia.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs what was the date of the signature of the Commercial Convention between the United Kingdom and Persia, and the date of its ratification; when was the communication made by the British Government to the Persian Government in regard to the modification or interpretation of Article II. of the Convention; and what were the terms of the communication thus made.

LORD CRANBORNE: The date of signature was the 9th of February last; the date of the exchange of ratifications was the 27th of May last. Sir Arthur Hardinge was instructed on March 9th that His Majesty's Government were anxious that it should be made clear before ratification that in our view the words most-favoured-nation did not preclude preferential treatment by one part of the Empire to another.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Will the noble Lord say whether it is the case that this treaty is not now to be had, that the copies of it have been withdrawn for the purpose of correction?

LORD CRANBORNE: Yes. The nature of the correction is this. The signature of the Persian Plenipotentiary was not inserted in the Papers originally laid. The Persian Plenipotentiary signed the Persian text, and it ought to have been included in the Papers.

Education Grants.

*MR. ALFRED DAVIES (Carmarthen Boroughs): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will state in detail the amount of grants for last year given respectively to England, Wales, Scotland, and Ireland for schools of all sorts, colleges, Universities, or any other educational purposes.

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. RITCHIE, Croydon): It is not practicable to analyse our educational expenditure in the manner suggested by the hon. Member.

*MR. ALFRED DAVIES asked if the amount in total could not be given for the different nationalities.

*MR. RITCHIE: No, it is impossible.

Foreign Trade with British Dependencies.

MR. HERBERT SAMUEL (Yorkshire, Cleveland): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he will grant the Return relating to the trade of foreign countries with British colonies and dependencies standing on to-day's Notice Paper.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central): A Return shall be prepared showing for the last available year the imports from foreign countries into the self-governing colonies, India, and the principal Crown colonies, distinguishing (*a*) principal articles, and (*b*) imports of food, raw materials and manufactured articles. This Return will cover that already promised to the hon. Member for the High Peak division, and it will afford materials from which any hon. Member can arrive for himself at the total value of the imports of articles which in his opinion cannot be supplied from the United Kingdom.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE: Will the items for Australia be added together. Up to the present time the figures are given for the separate colonies.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I think so.

MR. D. A. THOMAS (Merthyr Tydvil): Will the Return be only for one year?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: Yes, and for that period it will take several months to prepare.

Appended is the Return referred to in the foregoing Question:—

Trade (Foreign countries with British colonies, &c.)—Address for Return showing, for the latest year for which statistics are available, the value of the imports from foreign countries into the British Colonies and Dependencies of the following articles, the colonies, &c., to be regarded as a whole, but each article to be given separately, viz.: Areca nuts, bacon and hams, beche-de-mer, beef (salted), beeswax, birds nests, bran, broom-corn, butter, charcoal, cheese, coffee, copra, cotton (raw), curry-stuffs, eggs, extract of logwood, &c., flour, fodder, fruit (dried and preserved) fruit (fresh), gambier, grain and pulse, ground nuts, gums and resins, hides and skins, japanware, joss-sticks and joss-paper, lard, live-stock, manure (oil cakes), manure (guano), molasses and syrups, nutmegs, nuts (edible), oils (excluding linseed when distinguished), onions and garlic, opium, ores of metals, pepper, pork, rattans, sago, seeds, shell, silk (raw), sugar, tapioca, tea, tin (unmanufactured), tobacco (unmanufactured), turpentine (spirits of), wines, wood and timber.

Foreign Trade—Policy in British Markets.

SIR EDGAR VINCENT (Exeter): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if, in the inquiry now proceeding, evidence will be collected respecting the alleged sale below cost price of foreign goods in English markets, and to ascertain whether the alleged sale at a loss by foreign producers is due to deliberate policy or to bad trade conditions abroad; and if, in the case of each trade affected, full and detailed figures will be produced.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: Such information as is available on the subject is being compiled, and the question of publication will be considered.

Cunard Agreement.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether the new agreement between the Cunard Company and the Government has been completed, and what the terms of it are.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I anticipate that the agreement between the Cunard Company and the Government will be executed in the course of this week. A copy will be subsequently laid on the Table of the House.

President Loubet's Visit to the City—Police Action.

COLONEL NOLAN: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if the Commissioner of Police and the Home Secretary have received a complaint in reference to the constables of G Division in Holborn on the day when the President of the French Republic visited the City; and if they have replied to the communication and investigated the conduct of the constables in question.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. AKERS DOUGLAS, Kent, St. Augustine's): I am making inquiry into this matter.

Metropolitan Police Fund Account.

MR. CREMER (Shoreditch, Haggerston): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what rate of interest is allowed by the Bank of England to the Metropolitan Police Receiver for the balance in the bank of the Police Fund Account; what was the amount allowed during the year ending 31st March last in respect of such bank interest; and whether such amount can be shown separately in the Metropolitan Police Accounts in April of each year instead of being included under the general heading of miscellaneous receipts.

*MR. AKERS DOUGLAS: The Bank of England allows no interest on the balance of the Metropolitan Police Fund; but from time to time the Receiver for the Metropolitan Police District, through the agency of the Bank, lends on the market any available balance at the current market rate. For the year ended 31st March, 1903, the total net amount of interest so received was £2,482 17s. 4d. The amount yielded by this source of income will in future be shown as a separate item in the Metropolitan Police Funds.

MR. CREMER: What is the amount generally deposited in the Bank?

*MR. AKERS DOUGLAS: I must ask for notice of that.

Glanders.

MR. KEARLEY (Devonport): I beg to ask the hon. Member for North Huntingdonshire as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture whether he is aware that glanders among horses and men has been more than usually prevalent during the past year; and, if so, can he say whether the Returns show a considerable increase generally over those of twenty years ago; and whether the Department intend, under the circumstances, to carry out the recommendations made four years since by a Departmental Committee.

*MR. AILWYN FELLOWES (Huntingdonshire, Ramsey): There has recently been some increase in the number of cases of glanders reported, 795 outbreaks having occurred in the first twenty-nine weeks of the present year as compared with 641 in the corresponding period of 1902. The disease is one, however, which has always been subject to considerable fluctuations, and it was not more prevalent last year than it has been on several occasions since it was first scheduled in 1877. The number of deaths from glanders amongst men have varied from six in 1889 and

1897 to one in 1896. The inquiry to which the hon. Member refers was necessarily followed by further scientific investigations as to the communicability of the disease and the effects of the application of mallein. The Report of those investigations has been received, and we are now in communication with the local authorities principally concerned with a view to ascertain to what extent it may be practicable to give effect to the recommendations of the Departmental Committee.

Public Parks—Contracts for Kiosks and Chairs.

MR. CREMER: I beg to ask the hon. Member for West Derbyshire, as representing the First Commissioner of Works, whether, seeing that the contracts for the letting out of chairs in the parks and the supply of refreshments at stalls and in the kiosks expire during the present year, he will, before renewing the contracts, and with a view of obtaining a greater revenue from both sources and supplying the public with a better class of refreshments than can now be obtained, invite tenders from other contractors publicly through the agency of the daily Press.

MR. VICTOR CAVENDISH (Derbyshire, W.): The contract for the letting of the chairs in Hyde Park and a portion of Kensington Gardens does not expire until 1906. The remaining contracts for chairs are held on yearly licence. In Regent's Park only is the lessee of the chairs also the contractor for refreshments. The First Commissioner proposes, as opportunity and funds permit, to erect kiosks and invite tenders from a limited number of selected firms, but he does not think it would be in the public interest to adopt the hon. Member's suggestion.

MR. CREMER: When was the last contract entered into?

MR. VICTOR CAVENDISH: I must ask for notice of that Question.

Vaccination in Scotland.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate, seeing that the use of humanised lymph is prohibited in England and most other European countries, will he consider the expediency of taking such steps as may be necessary to prevent parochial vaccinators in Scotland from adopting a system of arm-to-arm vaccination, which has been condemned by a Royal Commission, and also by leading medical authorities in Europe.

*THE SOLICITOR-GENERAL FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. SCOTT DICKSON, Glasgow, Bridgeton): The hon. Member is misinformed in stating that humanised lymph is prohibited in England. It is not at present in contemplation to take the steps suggested in the Question.

MR. WEIR: Does the hon. Gentleman not know that the Royal Commissioners who inquired into this question distinctly stated that——

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The hon. Member is not entitled to argue the matter.

Collection of Crown Rents—Clerk's Salary.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether his attention has been directed to the remarks of Mr. Justice Darling at the Guildford Assizes on Monday last, who, in sentencing the chief clerk in the employ of the deputy surveyor and collector of Crown rents, Windsor Great Park, to a term of imprisonment for forging a receipt in order to cover defalcations, said that, having regard to the salary of the prisoner, which was only £1 16s. per week, and the money which passed through his hands every year of nearly £12,000, he had been placed in a position of great responsibility; and, if so, whether any steps will be taken to impress upon the collectors of Crown rents the propriety of paying more generously the servants by whom the duties appertaining to these offices are in the main discharged.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. ELLIOT, Durham): The clerk referred to had been employed for a long period, and was gradually given more trust and responsibility by the deputy surveyor than the Commissioner of Woods was aware of. The question as to the duties of the deputy surveyor and the staff required in his office is under consideration.

New Public Buildings in Dublin.

MR. MOONEY (Dublin Co., S.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury if he will now state, as promised, the name of the architect to whom it is proposed to entrust the drawing up of the plans for the new buildings contemplated by the Public Offices (Dublin) Bill.

MR. ELLIOT: My promise was that I would attach great weight to a joint recommendation of the Board of Public Works and of the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction. I have not yet received a joint recommendation from those Departments, but hope to do so when the Bill becomes law.

MR. JAMES O'CONNOR (Wicklow, W.): Shall we have the name of the architect before the House rises?

MR. ELLIOT: I am awaiting the joint recommendation of the two bodies I have referred to.

St. Jude's, Birmingham—Alleged Breaches of Ecclesiastical Law.

MR. BRYNMOR JONES (Swansea District): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether his attention has been drawn to a service which took place on the morning of the 19th instant in the Church of St. Jude, in Birmingham, and in which there were divers serious breaches of the ecclesiastical law, and to a parish magazine issued by the incumbent of the said church; whether, in view of the fact that the present incumbent was appointed in or about May, 1896, by the Crown upon his recommendation, he is prepared to give assurances to this House that in future the ecclesiastical patronage of the Crown shall be restricted to those clergymen who are prepared to render obedience to the Book of Common Prayer, the Articles of Religion, and the law as determined by the Courts having statutory jurisdiction in matters ecclesiastical.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Mr. Pinchard was appointed upon my recommendation in 1896. His claims were very strongly pressed upon me as an able and energetic parson and an eloquent preacher by men of different schools of theological thought, Low and High Church alike. I was also informed that in his previous experience he got on extremely well with non-Episcopalian denominations of Christians. Mr. Pinchard is known to be a High Churchman, but I am assured by himself and others that he is not a Ritualist. These were the circumstances under which Mr. Pinchard was appointed when the state of the parish was at a very low ebb. As the hon. and learned Gentleman knows, I have no control over the character of the services in this or in any other parish.

MR. BRYNMOR JONES: I should like to ask whether, if reasonable facts are laid before the right hon. Gentleman, showing that there have been breaches of the law in this parish, the Treasury will pay the expenses of a prosecution under the Act of 1840 by a responsible parishioner.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have always been one of those who have held that the present practice, under which the cost of a prosecution falls on the Bishop, is preposterous. I agree with the hon. and learned Gentleman so far, but I do not think I can start now a new precedent with regard to one particular section of the clergy—namely, those who are appointed by the Crown.

MR. AUSTIN TAYLOR: In view of the facts here stated, may I ask the right hon. Gentleman if he will now give facilities for a general amendment of the law which would enable the Courts to determine—

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! That does not arise out of the Question.

Judge Advocate General.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he will give directions that the Vote for the Judge Advocate General's Office and Military Law shall be taken out of Vote

1 in the Army Estimates and put into a Vote by itself, so that it may be conveniently discussed.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR replied in the negative.

MR. SWIFT MACNEILL: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the office cannot be discussed except as a separate item?

[No answer was returned.]

Licensing Question.

SIR THOMAS DEWAR (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he will consider the advisability of introducing next session a Licensing Bill before the Brewster Sessions in February.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: My hon. friend is aware that I have promised to make a statement on this subject before the session closes.

The East Coast and the Fiscal Inquiry.

MR. CHARLES WILSON (Hull, W.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury, in view of the fact that there is no interchange of traffic in shipping on account of the geographical position between the colonies and the East Coast from north of the Thames to Aberdeen, and that the colonies do not purchase English and Scotch coals (being the foundation of the East Coast trades), whether the inquiry into the fiscal policy of this country will embrace the effect of preferential tariffs on the trade with foreign countries on which the East Coast depends.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not think I can give a better answer to the Question than I put on the Paper a few days ago in answer to an unstarred Question of a friend of mine on this side of the House.† I then said—and I think the Answer will hold good to this class of Question—"It would, I think, be inexpedient, on the one hand, to lay down any limits beyond which the inquiry ought not to go, and, on the other, formally to include within it everything which could be described as germane to the subject. If the first course were adopted, it might be found that most important topics were excluded; if the second, the range of investigation might become almost unmanageable."

MR. CHARLES WILSON: My point is that the prosperity of the East Coast depends on this.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not understand the hon. Gentleman's Question. He appears to know what the result of the inquiry is, and he appears to think that it will necessarily affect the prosperity of the East Coast.

MR. CHARLES WILSON was understood to say that he did know.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not think he does know it.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I wish to ask the Prime Minister what business will be taken on Thursday.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Colonial Office Vote.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Does the right hon. Gentleman propose to move the suspension of the Twelve O'clock Rule to-morrow?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Yes, Sir.

BOROUGH FUNDS BILL.

Lords' Amendment to be considered forthwith; considered, and agreed to.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (TRANSFER OF POWERS) BILL.

Lords' Amendments to be considered forthwith; considered, and agreed to.

AGED PENSIONERS BILL.

Reported, without Amendment, from the Select Committee, with Minutes of Evidence.

Special Report, brought up, and read.

Report and Special Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 276.]

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxxv., 1306.

NEW BILL.

REVENUE BILL.

"To make certain Amendments of the law relating to Customs and Inland Revenue, and of the law relating to the powers and duties of the National Debt Commissioners," presented by Mr. Arthur Elliot; to be read a second time upon Thursday, and to be printed. [Bill 297.]

PATENT OFFICE EXTENSION BILL.

Ordered, That Mr. Victor Cavendish, Sir Joseph Lawrence, and Mr Warner be members of the Select Committee on the Patent Office Extension Bill.—(*Sir A. Acland-Hood.*)

SOUTH AFRICAN LOAN AND WAR CONTRIBUTION BILL.

[SECOND READING.]

Order of the day for the Second Reading read.

*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT (Monmouthshire, W.): I think it will be recognised that this is a Bill of very great importance, both to the finance of this country and of the new colonies in South Africa. It covers a loan of £65,000,000, of which £35,000,000 is to be guaranteed by the British Exchequer, and £30,000,000 is to be received, as I understand, from the colonies as a payment to the British Exchequer. In the earlier part of the Bill there are the particulars which you would generally expect with reference to a loan of this magnitude; but as to the war contribution, that appears only as a sub-section to Clause 2, in which it is stated that any sums paid by the Transvaal as a contribution in respect of the expenses incurred by His Majesty's Government in or incidental to the prosecution of the South African War, and any sums paid for a similar purpose by the Orange River Colony, shall be paid to the National Debt Commissioners for the purpose of paying off the War Loan, the Supplemental War Loan, and other obligations, in reduction of debt. The remarkable part is that this clause does not give any indication how much the contribution is to be, how it is to be made, how it is to be secured, or even the dates at which it is to be paid. That is a most extraordinary manner of dealing with the application of £30,000,000, which was made part of the financial statement this year. In the Budget it was one of the elements which determined what the Sinking Fund was to be; because, when it was stated that the Sinking Fund would have been inadequate without this payment, this payment became part of the financial statement of this year. Yet in this Bill we are given no information as to the amount, no security as to the payment, and no indication as to the manner in which it is to be dealt with, or how it is to be raised! What is the meaning of this indefiniteness? It is evident that this loan could only be raised by two methods. It might be charged in some form or other on the revenues of these colonies, which can be done, I suppose, as they are Crown colonies, by the Imperial Legislature; or it might be done, also, I suppose, by the local Legislature. If there is one thing more necessary than another in this connection, it is that there ought to be legislative authority for the levying of this loan, and we ought to have the security, which apparently has not been produced. All we know of it, as far as I am informed, is a certain conversation that took place between the Colonial Secretary and certain parties in South Africa upon this subject, and certain transactions with reference to what is called underwriting in the City of London; but there are no responsible statements, and none of the parties with whom the conversation took place could be held responsible to this House. How is the underwriting going to operate, how are the underwriters made responsible to the Treasury for what is part of the finance of this country? It is perfectly obvious that we cannot be satisfied with this sub-section as it stands. There must be legislative action in this country or in the Transvaal to raise this money. The contribution of the money is a departure from the idea originally held by the Colonial Secretary on this subject, although I am not going to criticise that. His view originally was that it was to be a contribution made from the gold mining industry, which was to have been a very considerable sum. He used the word indemnity in his speech on 29th July, 1902. [MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN dissented.] Yes, I have the paper in my pocket, I am perfectly certain that was the word. An indemnity was to be paid after the war, and in this case the indemnity should be paid by the interest which had benefited so largely by the war. I remember commenting myself at the time on the phrase that that interest was a justification of the war, or a great part of the justification of the war.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN, Birmingham, W.): I wish very much that the right hon. Gentleman, if he has the papers to which he is referring, would kindly state the correct words. What I object to is the statement that the interest of the gold mining industry was a justification for the war.

*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I will supply the right hon. Gentleman with the quotation later. As I have said, I am not criticising the right hon. Gentleman's alteration of view on that subject when he got to South Africa. When he got there he thought that it was better, as he said, to secure that sum of money at once, that delay might affect the receipt of the contribution, and that on the whole it was better that matters should be settled out of hand than that they should depend on a contribution which might be regarded as indefinite. Now, the question is. How is it going to be secured, and what is going to be done? The right hon. Gentleman presented it as the case of a bird in hand; but how is the bird in hand, the payment of that sum of money which we are told is to be contributed, to be secured? We must do something now to secure the payment of that money. I would now pass on to the part of the Bill dealing with the loan of £35,000,000. The existing debt, that is, the pre-war debt of the Republics, was £2,500,000, and you are apparently starting them now with an additional debt of £62,500,000. In the schedule to the Bill it will be seen that of that debt only £10,000,000 is appropriated to new development in the new colonies. The rest of the £35,000,000 is what you might call dead weight. First you have the deficit of the Transvaal, £1,500,000, the former debt of the South African Republic, £2,500,000, and compensation by the Transvaal and Orange River Colony to loyalists in Cape Colony and Natal, £2,000,000; that is £6,000,000 of non-reproductive money. You have the acquisition of the existing railways, £14,000,000; in a certain sense, I suppose, that will return an adequate income, which has presumably been calculated. But that is not a new development, that is a state of things which existed before. Then there is repatriation and compensation, £3,000,000; of course, these advances by the way of loan are not reproductive, they are payment for losses incurred, and neither are the "other charges," £2,000,000, reproductive. It is to my mind a very serious matter for the finance of the new colonies that only £10,000,000 out of £65,000,000 can properly be called new development and reproductive. That is to my mind very serious. When you are raising large loans on any community you must have regard to what is the revenue of that community. It is now rather more than a year since peace was concluded, the financial year in the colonies ending on 30th June. There was an estimate last December which gave the revenue as £4,000,000.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: The revenue is £4,500,000.

*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I thought that probably that estimate would be increased.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: That was my statement in introducing the Resolution.

*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I was going to say that I expected the revenue would exceed the estimate which was then made. Now what would be the charge on a loan of £65,000,000 at 4 per cent.? The old charge on the debt in President Kruger's time was £125,000 a year, but the interest upon the two new loans will amount to not very far short of something like £2,500,000.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): £2,300,000.

*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I thought it was £2,500,000. Well, that is considerably more than half the whole revenue of the colonies as it stands. This is a considerable charge for the new colonies to start with. Well, of course, we ought to have now—and no doubt the right hon. Gentleman will give it to us —the estimate for the coming year of the revenue and expenditure of the colonies. The time for the Budget, I suppose, arrives at the close of the financial year, on 30th June.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: The figures are given in my speech on the Resolution.

MR. BUCHANAN (Perthshire, E.): Have the figures been verified?

*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: That was before the close of the financial year, 30th June.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: Yes, in May.

*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I have some recollection of a calculation in which there would be in the third year a deficit which would have to be covered by increased revenue. Take it at £4,500,000, what will be the amount of the charge created by the moneys which are to be borrowed? I now come to consider what portion of the loan is to be applied to reproductive works, and what is called new developments? One of the great difficulties, I always thought, during the course of the late war was to get people to realise the size of these countries with which we are now dealing. In a military sense, we unfortunately had to realise that in a manner we had not understood before. It is commonly said that these two colonies amount to the size of France and Spain put together. The sum of £5,000,000 does not go a very long way to develop a railway system in a country as large as France and Spain; it is about what it has cost us to make a single line rom Mombasa to Uganda. That does not seem to be a very adequate sum for what you call the "new development" of these countries.

I come to the next special point. When you have levied such a large sum as that in respect of loans, you come to the land settlement. I think now we might ask for some information as to what progress has been made in regard to land settlement; whether this covers the cost of purchase of land, and, that which is really the most serious part of the whole thing, whether it covers the cost of the restocking of the whole country where the stock has been practically destroyed. Then we ought also to know what the measures are in regard to land settlement, which is to establish a large British population ultimately upon the whole of these territories, and then what are the "other public works." Now, what does "other public works" cover? We have been told that a great and indispensable necessity of these colonies, and certainly of land settlement, is irrigation. Is this £2,000,000 to cover that? Irrigation, as we all know, is a most expensive operation, even if you have to deal with large streams which are dispersed over the country; but here irrigation, as everybody knows, must to a great degree consist of the construction of large reservoirs to store up water which is not to be found constantly in the streams. We had an estimate of £30,000,000 out of these great loans from Mr. Wilcox for irrigation alone. Why do I enlarge upon this? It is because it shows, in my opinion, that this is only the beginning of loans. It is perfectly obvious that the requisites of these countries will demand loans for development in addition to these and far beyond them, if anything is to be done at all resembling what we are told is in contemplation. But that is not the most formidable part of the thing. The most formidable part is unquestionably the cost of carrying out these undertakings, and the cost of carrying out these undertakings depends upon the question of labour. Now, I have for some years past insisted that this is the critical question in the whole matter. When you have got to consider that we are, first of all, dealing with a country which has been devastated, and with vast territories which will require great development, the critical and deciding question is the question of labour. And everybody knows that at this moment the question of labour is the disputed, and violently disputed, question in the Transvaal. Now, there have been some very curious developments upon this question of labour quite recently. One of the most formidable things, to my mind, is that the mining industry, the great industry there, has made what I may call a declaration of industrial insolvency, and has stated that with the resources which they can command they cannot conduct that industry unless they are allowed to conduct it upon the basis of Asiatic labour. That is a most formidable question. It is a question which does not and cannot affect only the mining interest, but every other interest. Every other interest is just as much entitled to cheap labour as the mining interest. Why is the whole of the rest of the community to be told that they must employ dear labour in order that the mines may have cheap labour so that they may pay greater dividends? That is a situation that will never be accepted, and ought never to be accepted.

I saw the other day an extraordinary paragraph describing what had taken place in the Transvaal at a meeting of what is called the Inter-Colonial Council. The paragraph stated that the Council had determined that the railway constructors should employ white labour—a thing which the mines had absolutely refused to employ because it was so dear—and that the railroads should be restrained to employ only 10,000 Kaffirs, and in order that the Kaffirs now employed on the railways should be compelled to go to the mines. I do not know whether that is true. If true, it is the most unjust proposal I ever heard made by anybody. The railways serve the whole community; the mining interest serve their shareholders. But by what right have the Inter-Colonial Council to determine that industry which is for the service of the whole community should be called upon to employ white labour because white labour is too dear to suit the mining interest. The mining interest go to the Stock Exchange and say that they are the wealthiest people in the world; but when they come to deal with other people they sue *in formâ pauperis*, and say, "We cannot afford to employ labour at the same price that other industries do in the colonies." I do not understand that language, nor have I ever been able to understand why in other parts of the world the gold-mining interest can be conducted by white labour and not there. If they are right, it is quite plain that the gold-mining industry on which the colony depends is impossible except on the basis of Asiatic labour. Then what we have to determine is, whether these new colonies, which we have purchased at such a vast expenditure of life and treasure, are to be a white man's country or a yellow man's country. That is really the decision that is to be taken by the British Government and the British Parliament. We are responsible. They are not self-governing colonies but Crown colonies, and the action which has to be taken in this matter has to be taken on the responsibility of those who express the policy and carry out and originate the policy of the British nation. That that is a very serious matter I think everybody will admit.

Now, as regards the railways, there appeared three days ago in the papers this telegram, dated from Pretoria, July 24th—

> "In the Legislative Council to-day there was laid on the table correspondence between Lord Milner and Mr. Chamberlain on the subject of Indian labour. Lord Milner requested Mr. Chamberlain to use his influence to induce the Secretary of State for India to agree to a request for the importation of 10,000 coolies from India for railway works, on the condition that the men should return to India on the expiry of their indentures. Mr. Chamberlain, in reply, stated that while the proposal was free from some of the objections raised by the European population in South Africa against imported labour, it was still necessary to ascertain the public feeling on the matter."

We are in the course of inquiry on many subjects. Is this to be a new inquiry on the subject of public feeling in South Africa in regard to Asiatic labour?

> "In any case," the Colonial Secretary added, "it was improbable that the Indian Government would consent to the proposal unless certain specified improvements in the present status of Asiatics in the Transvaal were effected."

I am glad that the right hon. Gentleman has taken that view of the subject. Let it not be said that no information can be given on the subject at present, because there is a Commission to inquire into it sitting in South Africa. We have a right to know now the decision of the Government. The Papers which were laid at Pretoria show a difference of opinion between Lord Milner and the right hon. Gentleman. Why did Lord Milner request this importation of Indian coolies for the railways? Was it at the instance of the mine-owners? So far as we know the Kaffirs are willing to work on the railways. Their objection is to be forced to work underground in the mines. Therefore, the railways, which are for the benefit of the community at large, can have their labour made cheaper. It is curious enough that in the same column of the newspaper from which I am quoting there is a telegram dated Johannesburg, July 24, which says—

> "The Consul stationed here has received a cablegram from Hong-kong containing a positive offer of 200,000 Chinese labourers to work in the mines for a term of five years, the wages to be £3 17s. 6d. a month, food included. The cost of the transport is to be arranged by the mining companies and deducted from the wages. This offer has been submitted to the representatives of the industry."

That is the real question. The mine-owners are determined to force the British Government, if they can, to sanction the introduction of Chinese labour. They have discredited white labour, they have depreciated black labour, and they are insisting, time after time, on the importation of Chinese labour. I do not attach much importance to these telegrams. They are the gambling counters of the bulls and bears to galvanise the paralysed industry of the Kaffir market. One man says to another, "At last the Government are going to give way. We are going to get Chinese cheap labour." So things go up one-sixteenth, and if there is any doubt about the matter next day they come down one-eighth. But I say it is time for the Government to speak out and tell us whether or not they are against the introduction of Chinese cheap labour into South Africa.

*MR. SPEAKER: I am sorry to interrupt the right hon. Gentleman, but I fail to see how the question of Asiatic labour arises on this Bill. I am aware that the difficulty of obtaining labour for the new works is relevant to the Bill, but the right hon. Gentleman is going into a much wider question, which would be more properly discussed on the Colonial Vote.

*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: If you will allow me, Sir, may I submit that there is a controversy going on in the Legislative Council as to the labour to be employed on these railways; and the question whether or not this £5,000,000 for the railways will be sufficient depends upon the nature of the labour that is to be employed on them. Lord Milner desires that Asiatic labour should be employed on the railways; but I am glad to say, so far as I can see, that is not the view of the Colonial Secretary. I cannot see how, if we are to discuss the Vote for railways, we are to leave out of consideration the question of the cost of labour, which is a most material consideration.

*MR. SPEAKER: I do not for a moment say that the right hon. Gentleman is not in order in pointing out the great difficulty there would be in carrying out the works owing to the want of labour. But I thought the right hon. Gentleman was going into the larger question of the employment of Asiatic labour in the mines, which hardly arises on this Bill.

*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: It seems to me to be of consummate importance that this question of labour should be set at rest in this country and in South Africa. I hope we shall not be excluded on this Bill, which is really going to dispose of the whole of the finances of South Africa to the amount of £65,000,000 from discussing the question of labour, upon which the revenue and expenditure of the country must depend. Otherwise, it would be idle to discuss this Bill at all. The Colonial Secretary told us frequently during the progress of the war that we ought to have great regard for the opinion of the other colonies in that matter. I hope the right hon. Gentleman will have an equal respect for colonial opinion in the matter of the question of Chinese labour in South Africa. The colonies have had experience of Asiatic labour, and there is no doubt of their sentiments with respect to it. Curiously enough, in the same issue of the newspaper, following the telegrams to which I have referred, there is a telegram from Wellington, dated 24th July, which says that the Prime Minister of New Zealand was that day asked in the House of Representatives to give a day for the discussion of a Resolution of protest against the employment of Asiatic labour on the Rand. Mr. Seddon, who is well informed about South Africa, for he was there, said he had some doubt as to how far they could take that course. He said that it would put them in a delicate position, for if the mines were self-governing, it would be an encroachment. Apparently, the impression which Mr. Seddon carried away from Pretoria is that the mines are the self-governing power in South Africa. He seemed to think that the mines are the Government.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: They are not.

*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I know they are not. But it is curious that Mr. Seddon, who is an intelligent man, should have carried away that impression from what he saw of things in South Africa.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: The right hon. Gentleman is basing his argument on a few words of summary of a long speech, and I have found, in my own experience, that that is a dangerous thing to do. But, taking the words as they stand, it is perfectly clear that what Mr. Seddon said was that if the mines were self-governing something might be done which he would not do as they were not. That was his argument.

*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: The right hon. Gentleman knows the mind of Mr. Seddon better than I do.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: Yes, I do, and I have never sneered at him.

*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I did not sneer at him. I have enjoyed the friendship of Mr. Seddon, and I have never found him incapable of expressing his own ideas perfectly clearly. He says, "the land, being Crown colony, the question of propriety arose." That is true. These being Crown colonies it is for us—it belongs to the Executive of the British nation, it belongs to the authority of the British Parliament—to interfere in a question of this kind. One line more I will read of Mr. Seddon. I do not know whether the right hon. Gentleman has any explanation to offer as to this.

> "The introduction of Asiatics might make South Africans think that their sacrifices had been in vain. The Chinese were a signal failure underground. He would take steps to ascertain the views of the members of the House concerning the protest."

That was only a few days ago, and we shall probably learn what took place in consequence of that. You cannot leave undecided what you are going to do about this matter of Asiatic labour. You have raised this question yourselves, and I believe unless you make it perfectly clear that the British Government are not going to commit the country to this form of labour as the basis of the social condition of the colonies which, in every country that has had experience of it, in every colony which knows it, is regarded as a mark of degradation and of infinite injury to the society in which it exists, unless you make that clear you are encouraging that gamble which is now going on entirely upon the basis of this question of labour in South Africa. You are enabling some people to delude ignorant speculators more than they have been deluded already, to their injury and ruin; and you are encouraging hopes, which ought never to have been encouraged and can never be fulfilled, in respect to the future of the social condition of the new colonies which you have purchased at such a price and for which you are now responsible. The question is whether higher dividends are to be procured in gold mines by the adoption of a policy contrary to the opinion of the people and most injurious to their permanent interests. It is perfectly useless to raise this question at present, because the overwhelming opinion of the population is against it. If so, why not declare at once that it is a policy to which you will not consent, and then I believe you will give great relief to the sentiment of the colonies and retrieve the Government of this country from the adverse judgment of other nations. You can do no greater service to these new colonies than by holding decided and intelligible language on this subject.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: Before I answer the questions of the right hon. Gentleman, I hope I may be allowed, on behalf of this side of the House, to offer him our most hearty congratulations on his recovery from his recent indisposition, and our delight that he is well enough to be once more with us and to add lustre to our debates. At the commencement of his remarks the right hon. Gentleman, as I understood him, asked what was the security for the loan we were asked to guarantee and also as to any security we should have for the payment of the money which was to be given to us as a war contribution. A great deal of what he has said has really been answered by me in advance in the very full statement which I made to the House when the Resolution which preceded this Bill was introduced. I then explained, as a matter of course, that the legislation for the £30,000,000 loan would be introduced into the Legislative Council of the Transvaal. The only reason why it has not been introduced up to the present is that there has been some necessary communication between the Treasury and the different Departments in this country and the Transvaal as to the exact form of the Ordinance that is to be passed, but I entertain not the slightest doubt of any kind that the Legislative Council will without any difficulty pass this Ordinance giving legal security to the loan which we will raise, and the first instalment of which we will probably raise at the commencement of 1904. The right hon. Gentleman asked what security we had for the underwriting part of the agreement promised by representatives of the Transvaal. That is now under negotiation. The exact form of it is now being settled, and I have no doubt it will be easily arranged.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: With whom?

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: With the Gentlemen who have agreed to underwrite the first £10,000,000 of the loan. I have no doubt that the agreement will be faithfully carried out by all the parties to it and that a satisfactory agreement will be made between us and the underwriters of the loan, to make it absolutely certain, at all events as to the first instalment of the loan that it will be placed on the market. Even if we had not the agreement I am of opinion, founded on information I have received from persons qualified to advise, that the loan will be easily put on the British market. The total result of what the right hon. Gentleman has said is that the new colonies will start with a debt of £65,000,000. I do not think he quite grasped the amount of the sum. Of course, so far as £30,000,000 are concerned, it is not reproductive. It is like our own debt, it is the result of war. And according as you think the war was a good or bad thing for the country you can approve or disapprove of the indebtedness it involves, but as regards the £35,000,000, £25,000,000 is to go against the existing liability and is not in any sense a new indebtedness. £10,000,000, or rather £9,500,000 to speak more accurately, is to be devoted to immediate developments, and one reason why we have taken that sum and not a larger sum is that it was believed we could not expend in the next few years a larger sum than we have taken in this loan. The right hon. Gentleman said that I said in the speech referred to that it is to be remembered that this is only the beginning. I entirely agree, and I congratulate the House upon it. I believe in the new colonies we have two of the most progressive countries in the world, and that it is absolutely certain that in the near future they will require very large sums for their further development. As the right hon. Gentleman says, this is the first step. Should it unfortunately prove to be unsuccessful, and the expenditure not prove to be productive, my expectations will not be fulfilled, but from the best information I have been able to obtain, my own opinion is that it will succeed in the most remarkable way, and that these colonies will have no difficulty whatever, whether they are under our control as Crown colonies or as self-governing colonies at the time, in raising any funds required for further development. The right hon. Gentleman, however, seems to think that the charge is a large one. £2,500,000, he says, is half of the revenue of the country. It is a large charge, and a large one proportionately to the revenue, but it is not so large as he thinks, because he has omitted the revenue which we have separated for the purposes of account—the revenue to be derived from the railways. The revenue to be derived from the railways is estimated at £2,500,000. The total revenue, therefore, is £7,000,000 and not £4,500,000. The charge is calculated to pay the full interest and sinking fund on the liabilities which we are now proposing. If there is, as we believe there will be, in the future a large surplus, that will form a basis for further borrowing operations for public works. I agree that £2,000,000 is a small sum if it were to be considered as a final sum to provide for public works, and, above all, for the purposes of irrigation. At the present moment, however, the works of irrigation to which we are to confine ourselves are those smaller works which are to be carried out by the people themselves, and from which they will derive immediate profit. I saw in South Africa more than one case in which a local farmer had himself carried out at his own expense a small work of irrigation, and it turned what would otherwise have been an unprofitable farm into a farm that produced very large advantages. I have no doubt with the assistance of the Government an immense deal can be done, and, as a matter of fact, is being done, to give additional value to the farms already working. Lord Milner and the Government contemplate something much larger in the future. We must gain our experience. It will be a considerable time before we can present a plan which will commend itself to the House, or even to the local Legislature, but we do believe we shall be able to present a plan which will deal in the first instance with the damming of the Vaal River, which will turn into most valuable land that which is at present productive of small results. All this, I would point out to the right hon. Gentleman, will only be undertaken if there is clear evidence of its being productive. Therefore, I beg the House to consider that neither we nor the Transvaal need be afraid. As regards the future, whoever may fill my place will have to show plainly that the results of this expenditure have been so good that he is justified in asking the House to sanction something further in the same direction. I confess that, as regards this part of the right hon. Gentleman's speech, I asked myself what object could he have in view in recalling the attention of the House in a somewhat pessimistic spirit to these calculations? He cannot desire that we should refuse this gift or contribution of £30,000,000, which, according to my view, through their patriotism the people of the Transvaal have made towards the cost of the war. Neither do I think that he will come down and, as a matter of principle, ask the House to refuse the guarantee of the £35,000,000 which is required to meet the existing liabilities of the Transvaal, to secure the conversion of their loans and liabilities into a less expensive security, and also to provide for the immediate developments of the next few years

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: I do not propose either.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I am very glad to hear that. In that case we are agreed as to the principle. I suppose I may take it, therefore, that the principal reason for the remarks the right hon. Gentleman has made has been to call attention again to the question of labour in the Transvaal colony. In regard to that he called attention in the first place to a resolution of the Colonial Council, which represents both races in the Transvaal, and, I believe, is thoroughly representative of every interest in the two colonies. That resolution was to this effect—that, in their opinion, it was undesirable that Kaffirs who had no objection to underground labour should be taken for the superficial labour that may be required in connection with the railways. That appears a perfectly reasonable view. I see no cause whatever to object to that resolution. I consider it a matter of local concern whether effect should be given to it or not. The object of it is plain. At the present time you have a certain amount of labour which comes, apparently willingly and without the slightest compulsion, to work in the mines. If you tempt that labour away by higher wages, or even by employments which they might prefer—although I do not know that that is the case with a great many of these tribes—you throw the whole of the industry out of gear. The right hon. Gentleman always speaks as if he sees in this some sordid matter of Stock Exchange speculation. There is a Stock Exchange speculation which may be sordid, but that has nothing to do with the main question which this House has to consider. We have to consider that this industry, however it may have been used for speculative purposes, is the main industry of the Transvaal, that upon it depends the prosperity of the Transvaal and every man, woman and child in it. Upon the prosperity of this industry depends the prosperity of every Boer farmer and every Boer inhabitant, and the prosperity of the natives, as well as of the white population. It is at the present time the main stand-by of the Transvaal.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: There is the proposal about Chinamen.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I will come to the right hon. Gentleman's Chinaman in time. May I hope from that interruption that, so far at all events, I carry the right hon. Gentleman with me? He agrees with me that we have to consider this thing altogether apart from the Stock Exchange. I wish he could get the Stock Exchange out of his mind, and that he would regard it entirely as a question affecting an important industry in an important colony, on which everything in the colony depends. Why is it that at the present time we have a revenue of £4,500,000 in the Transvaal? Twenty years ago the revenue was £100,000, or something of that sort. Why has it increased from a mere nothing to £4,500,000? Entirely because of this industry. Why are we able to make railways? Why do we want railways? We want them for two reasons—in the first place, to serve this industry, and, in the second place, to enable the Boer farmer to profit by this industry by selling his produce to the centres of population which this industry has created. So, whichever way you look at it, you always come back to the fact that this is an industry the prosperity of which it is the bounden duty of anybody who sits upon this Bench, to whatever political Party he may belong, to assist and encourage in every reasonable way. I think it would be a grievous mistake in policy, and fatal to the prosperity of the country, if we were suddenly to create a new and tempting demand for the labour of the Kaffir, which would still, more than has already been done, lower the produce of this great industry. What would be the result? What on earth would be the good of employing 10,000 Kaffirs to make railways to serve the mines and the population of the mines if the mines ceased working, if the population were dispersed and the country were ruined? How on earth you could pay the interest on this or any other loan for the life of me I do not know. Therefore, when it was proposed to me that the work done for the railways, for this fresh development, should not, as far as it can possibly be avoided, interfere with the existing labour system which provides for the success of the industry, I thought it was a perfectly fair and reasonable proposition, and, so far as I am concerned, I entirely approve of it. Now, in order that the development may proceed at the greatest possible rate, Lord Milner applied to me and said, "We are thinking of employing coolies on the railway. Will you represent to the Indian Government our desire in that respect, and use your influence to induce their assent?" It was assent to a proposal which the Indian Government had already accepted in the case of Natal—namely, that the coolies should come for a given period, that their indentures should expire in India, that the balance of their pay should be given to them in India, so that they would not be permanent residents in the South African sub-continent, but would return to their native country with their savings in their pockets. It was believed by the Indian Government that that was the best way in the interests of India, and it was believed by the Natal Government to be the best way to secure labour for the sugar estates and other work without inducing a permanent population of Asiatics. That agreement has been made and assented to by both sides; and even if the right hon. Gentleman disapproves of it, which I do not believe he does, he would not ask me to make any protest against it. He would not ask me to make any protest against it in the case of a self-governing colony—why, then, should I make a protest against it in the case of the Transvaal because it is not a self-governing but a Crown colony? I have explained already the policy which I intend to pursue, so long as I am in my present office. Unless a distinctly Imperial interest is concerned, I intend to treat the Transvaal as though it were a self-governing colony. For the security of Imperial interests, I believe it will be necessary for some years—I cannot say how many—to continue in the Transvaal the system of Crown colony government;

but, as far as I am concerned, it shall be as little onerous as possible. It shall interfere as little as possible with local opinion, local wishes, and local aspirations; and I am not going to interfere in this matter of Transvaal labour any more than I would in the case of the Cape Colony or Natal. Now, the right hon. Gentleman says that the correspondence to which he refers showed a difference of opinion between Lord Milner and myself. I do not regard it in that light in the least, and I am not certain that Lord Milner is not in entire accord with me. He did not know of any objection, and he applied to me to know whether I had any objection. I said that before I assented to any introduction of Asiatic labour, whether Chinese or Indian, into the Transvaal I must have some reasonable proof that it was a policy which the Transvaal, if it were a self-governing colony, would approve. If I got that assurance, any opposition on my part would at once disappear.

*SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT : May we see that correspondence ?

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN : Certainly, with pleasure. But I had also to point out to him that I had been in communication with the India Office upon this matter, and that the India Office, on behalf of the Government of India, made complaints of the treatment of Asiatics already in the Transvaal, and the Indian Government asked for certain concessions to be made in their favour. I pointed out to Lord Milner that I had applied to the India Office to know how they would regard such a proposition, and that they would not agree to give any assistance to a proposal of this kind until they were convinced that fair consideration was being shown to those for whom they were responsible, the Indians in the Transvaal. I do not think that is likely to be a permanent difficulty. It appears to me to be probable that an arrangement may be come to between the Government of the Transvaal and the Government of India as to the treatment of Asiatics which may be regarded by both sides as a fair and satisfactory agreement in the circumstances. It has not been arrived at yet, but I think it might be. If so, that difficulty would be removed, and the only other point would be the one to which I have referred —that I should want some evidence that the people of the Transvaal by a large majority were in favour of the employment of coolie labour. Why should coolie labour—the labour of our own fellow-subjects—be refused in a British colony ? What principle is involved, and on what ground are we to be asked to prevent what seems to me so natural an arrangement ? In Uganda the railway was wholly made by coolies. Was that a disadvantage either to India or to Uganda ? There was not sufficient labour in East Africa, and they had to rely entirely, in the first instance, upon coolies. In some cases the coolies have settled in the East African Protectorate, where, to the advantage of the country, they are still most useful citizens. But the majority of them return to India and take back with them an amount of money, which is to be spent in India, altogether above anything they could possibly have gained if they had remained in India. Why should not an arrangement of that kind be repeated again and again ? We have had exactly the same experience in the West Indies. We depend largely upon coolie labour, and, again, although in the initiation of that arrangement for an interchange of labour there were difficulties, they have since been prevented by a series of humanitarian laws which have amply protected the coolies. The result has been, not merely that a great number of coolies have found large advantages by working for a time in the West Indies, but also that a very good colonising movement has gone on there, and that a very considerable number of peaceful, industrious, and thrifty subjects have been established in some of the islands where their labour is required. Then there is the case of Mauritius. In Mauritius the population, which was originally of quite a different character, is now, I believe, by a majority, Indian and coolie, and Mauritius is more closely connected at the present time with India than it is with any other part of the world. That has taken place under a similar system. Is there to be free trade in everything except labour ? I really do not understand how those who profess to speak in the interests of our

Indian fellow subjects can deny to them the right of giving their labour in countries where their labour is desired. There are countries, as the right hon. Gentleman has pointed out—Australia, for instance, and New Zealand—which do not desire Asiatic labour; and, exercising the powers which they enjoy, they have passed stringent legislation to exclude it. Very well; let us treat the Transvaal in precisely the same way. If the opinion of the Transvaal is against this labour, let them pass legislation to exclude it, and no objection will come from this country.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE (Carnarvon Boroughs): Give them the right to legislate.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: As I say, if they object to this labour, let them legislate against it. They have a Legislative Council, which is not, perhaps, as Representative as hon. Members opposite would desire, but it is for the present as near a representative Council as we think it prudent to go. Of course the right hon. Gentleman and the hon. Member, if they came in, might try—I do not say they would—to upset the whole of our policy; but if they did the consequence would be on their heads. Meanwhile, about our view there is no doubt whatever. We think we have gone as far in that direction as we are justified in doing, and we say to the Council which we have created that we wish them to express their opinion. I admit we are perfectly ready to give due weight to any other expression of opinion.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: You have a majority on the Council.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I am not professing that I am going to take the opinion of the Legislative Council as a final opinion in such a matter; but there are other means of attaining to a knowledge of the public opinion of the Transvaal upon the subject. I have attained to that knowledge; and I have told the House that, in my opinion, which I do not think any one will contest at the present time, opinion is hostile. It is because I believe that at the present time the opinion of the Transvaal is hostile to the introduction of Asiatic labour that I make no movement whatever in its favour, and should not assent to it if it were proposed. And so long as the opinion of the Transvaal is hostile the right hon. Gentleman may rest perfectly satisfied that I shall not assent to it; and I shall certainly not be a party to imposing it upon a hostile majority. But the right hon. Gentleman asks me what the future is likely to be. I think it is very likely that the opinion which is now hostile may not always be hostile; and I have received information—I do not know exactly what importance to attach to it at the present moment—that amongst the Boer farmers the pressure for labour has become very acute, that a great change of opinion is taking place, and that provided they could be ensured the same terms as have been obtained by Natal as to the country in which the indentures of the persons imported should terminate, possibly a great majority of the Boer farmers before long might desire, might even ask and petition for, such an arrangement. Very well; all I have to say to the right hon. Gentleman is this. Let him be satisfied now that, as I believe the opinion is hostile, I am not going to give assent to any such proposal. But let him understand that, if opinion should cease to be hostile, then the same reason that leads me to give effect to what I believe to be the opinion of the majority in the Transvaal in one direction will also lead me to give effect to it in the other. If there came to me a demand, which I was quite unable to doubt was the demand of the great majority of the people of the Transvaal, quite irrespective of race, for the employment of Asiatic labour, I certainly should offer no objection. I really think I have practically dealt with the subject so far as it concerns this Bill. As regards Chinese labour, I will only say that is really a premature question. The right hon. Gentleman relies upon the little paragraphs which he sees in the newspapers. I assure him that, unless you have before you the full information, of which this is merely a summary, you are extremely likely to be misled as to the importance and the character of any movement whatever. At present, no suggestion of the kind has been made to me, and, so far as I know, no suggestion about Chinese labour has been brought formally to the notice of the Transvaal Government. It is perfectly certain that, whatever may be the objection to the employment of coolies, the objection to the employment of Chinese would probably be much greater. I hope, and I think I must gather from what the right hon. Gentleman has said, that he does not himself, any more than I do, take a pessimistic view of the situation. I think he is inclined to agree with me that there are enormous potentialities in these new colonies, and that we have reason for our belief, not only that they will be able to meet their present liabilities, but that a great development will take place and that they will be among the most prosperous countries which are covered by the British Flag.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): I really did not quite gather what the position of the Colonial Secretary is in this matter of coolie labour. I understood him to say discussions have been going on between the Indian Government and himself, that that Government have demanded certain conditions, and that he has, to a certain extent, agreed to those conditions. Under those circumstances I should have supposed that the arrangement was going to be concluded. Lord Milner is apparently doing his best to in uce the inhabitants of the Transvaal to agree to those conditions. At the end of his speech the right hon. Gentleman tells us that he admits that the opinion of South Africa and the Transvaal is at present hostile to this labour, and so long as that opinion is hostile the Colonial Secretary says he will not permit it. I should like to know how the right hon. Gentleman arrives at the conclusion that opinion is hostile in the Transvaal. He said he should always wish to treat the Transvaal as a self-governing colony, but unfortunately the Transvaal is not a self-governing colony. The Colonial Secretary derives his information mainly from the Legislative Council, but what is that Council? It is practically the opinion of the mineowners, and we know perfectly well that the mineowners are desirous of having some sort of additional contract labour for the mines. They have sent persons into West and East Africa, and they obtained an agreement—I presume with the consent of the Colonial Secretary—that a certain number of persons should be sent from East Africa. That, I understand, has not proved successful because the East Africans did not appreciate the position. They were taken ill and could not work out their contract. We then had a proposal that they should have labour either from China or India. The first idea was that labour should be obtained from India to work in the mines. I gather from the newspapers that Lord Curzon replied that there was not enough labour in India for the mines, and that he could not do that. Then the idea seems to have sprung up that we should enter into contracts with a certain number of coolies and we should bring them to the Transvaal in order to work on the railroads. Why? In order to free the black men and to ensure that they should work in the mines. The Colonial Secretary asks if the black man has not a right to choose whether he shall work in the mines or above ground? Of course he has. If you ask a farm labourer whether he prefers working above ground doing spade work to working underground he will most assuredly say the former. The right hon. Gentleman waxes indignant upon this point and asks—is there not to be free trade in labour as well as in other things? That is precisely what we have demanded again and again. But is it free trade when you tell a coolie that he may come to South Africa, but he will be sent back again when his contract is finished.

The right hon. Gentleman referred to the West Indies as an instance of success in regard to coolie labour. We have had to subsidise it there, and we are paying a subsidy at the present moment for introducing coolie labour. But what do the black men say there? They say it is most unfair because these coolies do not go back; they engage in business, and compete with local labour. Will the right hon. Gentleman agree that the coolie should be allowed to go individually if he likes to the Transvaal to contract for work above ground or under ground, or to engage in any other occupation? The right hon. Gentleman cited Natal, but the natives complain bitterly of their position in that colony, and say that they are not allowed to hold land, or to engage in this and that trade, and that they are practically to all intents and purposes little better than slaves. I am not going to oppose the Second Reading of the Bill, but unless we can get a clearer understanding as to what is to be done in regard to this coolie labour, I think when the Bill goes into Committee it would be very desirable on the part of some Gentlemen on this side of the House to move that we should reduce the Vote by £5,000,000. We should get a clearer understanding then than we have at present that there is to be free trade in labour in the Transvaal. The right hon. Gentleman says, "Oh! my right hon. friend the Member for West Monmouthshire, whom we are glad to see back, is always sneering at this great industry, because he calls it a Stock Exchange industry." The Colonial Secretary says it is a great industry. But what it depends upon is the Stock Exchange in England. Who are the heads of this great industry? The heads are speculators here. They do not hold their shares when they bring out a mine; they get hold of a mine or a claim and spend a little on it; it is made into a company, and then it is handed over to another company, and so it goes round and round until the capital is about twenty times what it ought to be. Now we are told that we ought to legislate, and agree to a division of labour which will enable these mine promoters to be able to secure a dividend on the immense capital which they have brought out. In the United States, and other parts of the world, but particularly in the United States, there are plenty of mines which are worked because they pay, and there are other mines which are not worked because they will not pay under the conditions insisted on. In America it is enacted that neither Chinese nor even black labour should be allowed in the mines, and I cannot understand why we should make this exception in the case of the Transvaal. The real reason why we do make it is that we have fallen absolutely under the subjection of these mineowners or promoters. Let there be perfect freedom there in regard to labour. Let us not make railways by coolies in order that the promoters may get the men for a mere pittance. Let them employ black men if they like, but when the right hon. Gentleman says that we are not aiding them to get black men I think he is mistaken.

It has been contended in this House that it is our business to tax black men, so that they may not remain on their little farms but be obliged to go out and work in order to be able to pay the tax. That is one way of aiding the mineowners. I do not say that we ought to destroy the industry for one moment, but why not subject it to the same conditions as it would be subjected to in this country or America? I wonder what would be said if it were proposed to reduce the price of coal and to give better dividends to great coal-owners by allowing them to import coolies or black men into this country. We should not allow it for a moment. Working men have had to pay very largely for the war. Surely they ought to profit by it, if anybody is to profit by it. What do the mineowners say? They say that that would introduce the serpent of trade unionism into the Transvaal, and that wages would go up. I do hope for my part that some missionary of labour will go to the Transvaal and induce the black men themselves to unite in a trade union. With trades unions people have got fair wages. Whether you take the coolie, or Chinese, or forced black labour, it is to all intents and purposes a species of veiled slavery. I wish to say one word about this particular loan of £30,000,000. Here again I do not think the right hon. Gentleman made it very clear what was the condition of the underwriting. The right hon. Gentleman thought we should be able to issue £10,000,000 which were underwritten in 1904. We may do it or we may not do it. I think in all these underwriting questions—and I speak to many who understand these things—that you have to be exceedingly careful to see that the underwriters do not get an option of underwriting or not underwriting, and that they should not have an opportunity of riding off on some little point if they like. We do not know what is to be the interest on the loan, or at what price it is to be issued, and these things ought to have been gone into before the right hon. Gentleman met gentlemen in the Transvaal and agreed that we should guarantee the £35,000,000 loan, on the understanding that they would underwrite in this vague way £10,000,000 of the other loan.

There is one Question I should like to ask the right hon. Gentleman. I remember some years ago in a debate in this House upon loans to Crown colonies, the right hon. Gentleman said that whenever a loan to a Crown colony is issued we practically guarantee it because we are responsible for it, and that if the interest was not paid, and the principal not repaid, we should have to do it. The Transvaal is not a self-governing colony. I suppose it would be called a Crown colony at the present moment. If the Transvaal does not pay, should we be bound to pay the interest on the loan, and also to pay back the principal ? According to the doctrine laid down by the Colonial Secretary that would be the case unquestionably. If that is the case, we are practically guaranteeing both these loans, and when the Transvaal becomes a self-governing colony it is very likely they may say, "You have inflicted loans of £65,000,000 upon us; we have not been consulted; you have consulted a simulacrum of representation —this Legislative Council, but we are not bound to it, because our consent was not obtained." For my part I do not complain of the right hon. Gentleman entering into what he considered to be a good bargain, but I think he would have done much better not to have made the bargain as to limiting the amount to be paid by the Transvaal to £30,000,000. He ought to have waited to see how the whole thing turned out in the mines, and considered what they could pay. My impression is that it will be very difficult for them to pay much, and if they could not pay anything, it would have been much better not to give in the form of a loan what we should pay ourselves. If they could pay, we ought to have made an estimate from experience and insisted on their paying it. The right hon. Gentleman cannot answer the Questions I have asked, because he has already spoken, but perhaps the Chancellor of the Exchequer will explain to us a little more about these Transvaal loans.

SIR ROBERT REID (Dumfries Burghs): In regard to the statement the Colonial Secretary made on the subject of Asiatic labour I think most Members of the House will be satisfied, because it implies that Asiatic labour is not to be introduced unless it is conformable to the sense of the great majority of the people themselves in the Transvaal. It is true that he did not explain, nor do I think he could explain, how the opinion of the majority could be decisively and clearly ascertained. At the same time, there is no doubt that it is the true test, and I hope the Colonial Secretary will continue not to admit this labour unless and until it does commend itself to the opinion of the people of the country. But, after all, this Bill does not deal with that subject. It is a Bill dealing with a large sum of money—£35,000,000—to which, in addition to our existing burdens, we are asked to give our assent, thereby increasing the liabilities of this country to that extent for one of the British colonies. That is a very large affair, but it is not the only part of the bargain. There is in addition to that a condition that a sum of £30,000,000 also should be lent to the Transvaal and guaranteed by this country. I should like very much if the Chancellor of the Exchequer would tell us explicitly whether or not this country is to be liable, not by direct guarantee, but substantially liable, for the £30,000,000. I will tell the right hon. Gentleman why I ask. There is not the least doubt that when a Crown colony incurs a debt, there is an opinion in many quarters that the Treasury is bound to see that that debt is paid. Well, if that is so, it would be far better and far cheaper for this colony itself for the fact to be explicitly stated. If, on the other hand, it is clear that we are to be held in any case liable for it, it would be equally desirable that it should be explicitly stated, because it would have a great effect on the amount of the interest at which this loan should be raised. Reference has been made to the fact that the first instalment of £10,000,000 is to be underwritten. It has not been stated, I think, that those who promised to underwrite the £10,000,000 would not do so unless the interest was 4 per cent., the consequence of which is that they may be making an extremely good thing by lending at 4 per cent., for besides the liability of the Transvaal they also have behind them the liability of this country. It is a matter on which there ought to be no doubt left, and in every sense it should be made clear. Provision is also to be made for £2,600,000 a year for repayment and the interest of these loans combined. But that leaves nothing at all for the sinking fund for the £30,000,000 loan, and certainly that is not a business-like way of issuing any loan of this kind.

Apart from that, if the £30,000,000 is added to the £35,000,000 there will be a debt of £65,000,000 on the country. I wonder if the House appreciates what an enormous burden that is. The white population numbers 400,000, and a debt of £65,000,000 amounts to upwards of £160 per head of the population, man, woman, and child. In the case of this country, which is generally supposed to be an affluent country beyond all others, our national debt amounts to £18 per head of the population, as against £160 in the Transvaal. Moreover, the people of that country are taxed to a degree of which we have no experience. Already their indirect taxation amounts to £10 per head, and our indirect taxation amounts to £2 per head of the population. But beyond all that, the cost of living has been stated by the Colonial Secretary in the last debate to be excessive to a degree of which we have no experience. An artisan, with wife and three children, cannot live in the Transvaal for less than £24 a month. He gets £30 a month wages, and all he can save beyond the necessaries of life is £6 a month. And the right hon. Gentleman said what is perfectly true, that there is no population in the world which is so heavily taxed, and that the present taxation interferes most materially with the well-being and the comfort of the people. I must say that that is a condition of things which makes one apt to criticise any fresh taxation to be imposed in that country. And it should be remembered that one source of revenue has been closed, because it was part of the bargain under which the underwriting of the loan was undertaken, that no fresh taxation should be imposed on the gold mines.

I remember what we were told during the war: that the gold mines were a source of inexhaustible wealth, that they were going to pay the whole cost of the war as well as the ordinary taxation of the country. But now they have secured an exemption in advance that there is to be no further taxation upon them beyond the gold tax, which is to amount to £600,000. Where, then, is the money to come from to pay the interest upon £65,000,000 of loans, in addition to the current expenses of the country? Apart from the sinking fund of the £30,000,000 loan, the annual service of the debt of the £35,000,000 loan will be £2,600,000. Where is the money to come from to pay it? The right hon. Gentleman the Colonial Secretary came into the House and delivered artistic and eloquent speeches, glowing with generalities and general anticipation; but if you examine his figures you find that unless there is a very large rise in the revenue, he himself and Lord Milner estimate that there will be a deficit three years hence: that unless there is a great increase in the product of the railways and of the general revenue the funds of the Transvaal will not be sufficient to pay the interest on the loans. The right hon. Gentleman anticipates that in three years time the railways will produce £2 500,000; but only a few weeks before Lord Milner estimated them to produce £2,000,000, not at their present earnings but at the anticipated earnings three years hence. That is a strange way to estimate for the future.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: Lord Milner did estimate £2,500,000 in May.

SIR ROBERT REID: I am aware of that, but a few weeks before his estimate was £2,000,000.

*MR. RITCHIE: I think that the right hon. Gentleman said that the estimate of £2,500,000 was based upon the income anticipated three years hence. That is not so.

SIR ROBERT REID: I am bound to bow to the financial authority of the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer: but I have gone over the Blue-books very carefully and I do not understand that the £2,500,000 is to be derived from the railways on present earnings. We do not possess the railways now. I am speaking of what is to be found three years hence in order to meet the services of the debt. I say that the estimate of the right hon. the Colonial Secretary when he last spoke on this subject was £2,500,000, and a few weeks before that Lord Milner's estimate was £2,000,000. He also assumed that the general revenue apart from railways will be swollen by £600,000 beyond what it is at the present time. These are estimates speculative in the highest degree, and unless these anticipations are realised there will be a deficit. My hon. friend the Member for, I think, Nottingham, stated in the last debate that these railways in the time of President Kruger brought in about £300,000 or £400,000 a year; and he said he could not understand how that £300,000 or £400,000 could be swollen to £2,500,000 in so short a time. He also added that the reason why there had been an abnormal increase in the railway earnings was that after the war an enormous quantity of material had to be brought up to replenish the country devastated by the war. And that is the speculative nature of the increase in railway earnings on which we are asked to vote this guarantee! The Colonial Secretary said that it was astounding what the results would be in the future. Every one of these things were to happen in the future, not in the present. They are all estimates of what will happen some time hence, and though I most heartily trust that these hopes will be realised, it is a very strong order to ask the House of Commons to endorse a Bill for a loan of £35,000,000 by discounting the future.

Let me examine for what the sum of £35,000,000 is required. It may be divided into two portions. £12,500,000 represents the money that is to be repaid to this country for compensation due to Natal, for repatriation, for compensation for property destroyed, for the cost of the conversion of the debt. All these are legitimate and useful purposes; and I quite agree that that money ought to be found. But let me point out that of the rest of the £35,000,000, a sum of £22,500,000 consists of mere development of the country—money which the people of this country are asked to subscribe for the purpose of the development of the Transvaal. That may be right or it may be wrong; but why should we be asked to subscribe £13,000,000 to buy the railways, £5,000,000 to build new railways, £2,500,000 for land settlement, and £2,000,000 for roads and irrigation? Is it necessary to find that money at once? As regards the existing railways we have never had any explanation offered to us. The railways are there; they must continue to run. What is the necessity during the next two or three years for spending £13,000,000 for the purpose of buying these existing railways because £1,000,000 had been spent already for plant. There may be a very good reason, but it has not yet been given in the debate. It is rather a strong thing, unless there is a necessity behind it, to ask this country to guarantee the money merely for the purpose of buying the railways in one of our colonies. Then £5,000,000 are to be spent on new railways. I understand that, according to the Blue-book, it is estimated that the new railways will make 8 per cent. That is part of the calculation on which we are asked to advance the money; but no particulars are given. If that is anywhere near the truth, why should not contractors, in the ordinary way, build these railways as in other colonies instead of finding a guarantee from the British taxpayers? Then, again, there is land settlement and irrigation, from which a total sum of £4,500,000 is asked. In regard to land settlement we have already spent £1,000,000 at the cost of upwards of £1,200 for each one settled. How far is that to go? In the Orange River Colony there are 360 settled at a cost of £1,200 each. If hon. Members will count that up they will find that land settlement is going to be a very expensive luxury. The original estimate was £1,000, and now it is £1,200. I know it is said that behind the minds of many men there is the idea, in that way, to infuse British blood into the Transvaal. But £100,000 is to be spent in settling eighty men and £1,000,000 for 800 men, that is the scale. Before anything of that kind is entertained I hope that hon. Members will reckon the cost and consider whether they cannot spend their money in other preferential methods by which to secure the settlement of the country.

The right hon. the Colonial Secretary told us to-day that the money now asked for, which amounts to £9,500,000, for new railways, irrigation and other public works is only a very small part of the sum that will be ultimately required. The amount now asked for is a very small part of what will be required.

The Colonial Secretary told us, in the most explicit language to-day, that we are only at the beginning of this expenditure. We are now asked to guarantee £35,000,000, of which £22,500,000 is for development. That is only the beginning, and a small beginning. The right hon. Gentleman was at pains to point out that it was only a small beginning. It is said by him, and also in the Blue-book by those who know, that it is contemplated that this development of the country is to be at the expense of the State, and is not to be done by private enterprise. With £65,000,000 of debt upon them, does anyone believe that the 400,000 population of the Transvaal will be able to raise any more money on their own responsibility. It will mean a further guarantee from us; and a further outlay of an incalculable kind for purposes as vague as they are enormous. For my part, I enter my most emphatic protest against it. Let us see what the general plan of development, even at this small beginning, amounts to. The general plan includes irrigation. A special report on irrigation was published about eighteen months ago, and the then estimate for irrigation alone was £30,000,000. It was a very general report, I grant, but I read it with very considerable interest, and there was a very strong indication at the end of it that the estimate mentioned would not be sufficient. I wonder if any such estimate ever does prove sufficient. So much for irrigation. Then there is buying land and settling it, so as to have an infusion of British into the rural districts. I have already stated the cost of that. There is also the restocking of the farms. It is stated that the native stock is almost entirely exterminated. Not only that, but a series of experiments will be required before we can find out what is the most useful stock to import; and at some future day we may have to again restock the country. Then there is afforestation, as well as railways, roads, bridges, water supply, and public buildings. For all these enormous sums will be required, according to the Colonial Secretary's information, far exceeding anything in this modest Bill for £35,000,000. We are now only being asked for money which may be spent within the next three or four years. We are told that the money is to come from the State; and we know that if the first £35,000,000 has to be guaranteed, the second £35,000,000 will require still more to be guaranteed; and the third still more than that. I say it is a vast, incalculable speculation.

I do not know whether I am single in my opinion—perhaps I am—but if any hon. Gentleman divides against this Bill I shall have the greatest possible pleasure in supporting him. I believe this to be a most unwise course. I believe the proper course would be to wait for two or three years, so far as the development part of the Bill is concerned. I am not speaking of the £12,500,000 which relates to the repayment of existing loans, and so forth. I sincerely hope there will be more of a representative element in the administration of the Transvaal. I believe both sides of the House are agreed as to that, and look forward to it, as I think they are agreed that, at this moment, it would be impracticable to introduce a self-governing system. I say it would be far better to postpone these things, because in a few years we would not have a far distant Government paying money for outlay on the spot where they are likely to be plundered, pillaged, and deceived according to the usual course of nature. I believe it is absolutely unprecedented for this country to guarantee a loan of £35,000,000 to one of the colonies. I do not say that both the British and the Boers are not entitled to our fullest sympathy. I believe they are, because their country has been devastated by a war which I believe was absolutely unnecessary; and for that reason they are entitled to our sympathy. I go farther. So far as meeting the present necessities of the case is concerned, no man would more readily vote money than I; and that applies also with regard to the obligations imposed upon us But I consider that this Bill, which is merely a small beginning of a huge vast plan for the development of the country, through guarantees given by this country, is a most unwise course. It would have been better to have waited for a few years until a more self governing, perhaps a wholly self-governing, colony could have undertaken it themselves. That would save this country being unjustly subjected to a burden which they should not be asked to bear.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: Certainly to a financier, even to a humble student of finance like myself, this proposal does not, at first sight, commend itself as a financial operation. The right hon. Gentleman opposite mentioned that we are going to buy the railways. That is part of our security. By the loan we are going to raise, we are going to purchase securities for it. But my objection to the Bill goes much farther than that. It seems to be almost inconceivable, and certainly it would not have been contemplated two or three years ago by anyone, that after spending £160,000,000 in conquering the Transvaal, instead of entering at once into the fruits of our victory, the first thing we have to do is to guarantee a loan of £35,000,000, and practically to undertake to guarantee another loan of £30,000,000 for the development of the country. The idea of endowing a colony with large sums for its development is entirely a new one. The Australian colonies were endowed with nothing but convicts; and the pilgrims who first colonised the United States never got a halfpenny from the mother country. Now it appears we are entering upon an entirely new method of dealing with the colonies. The Colonial Secretary rather appalled me when he introduced the Resolution on which this Bill is based. Let me remind the House that the £30,000,000 loan is part and parcel of this proposal. In introducing the Resolution the Colonial Secretary said—

> "The support of the Committee for the loan now under consideration is conditional on the contribution of £30,000,000 to which I have referred."

The Colonial Secretary also said—

> "What are the advantages of this arrangement. In the first place, it is a final arrangement. After three years we shall hear no more on the subject. The Bill will have been paid, and the claim met; we shall no longer have any grounds for intervention, and all interference with the internal finances of the Transvaal will be avoided."

The language of the right hon. Gentleman is very different to-day. He now says we shall have to interfere from time to time by furnishing further sums. That is a prospect that I cannot look upon with any satisfaction. The right hon. Gentleman looks upon it with great satisfaction; he says he congratulates the country upon it. I trust his grounds for congratulation may be made more apparent than they are to me at present. As to this £30,000,000, upon which the £35,000,000 is conditional, £10,000,000 of that has been guaranteed by the mineowners. They have underwritten the forthcoming loan of £30,000,000 to the extent of one-third, but that is a conditional underwriting. The guarantee, or the underwriting, of this £10,000,000 is purely conditional, and now the right hon. Gentleman says that the terms of the agreement for this underwriting are not yet settled. That seems to suggest that the underwriters may have repented their bargain, or conceivably that the Treasury have repented of their bargain to let the mineowners have this £10,000,000. If it be true, as the right hon. Gentleman the Colonial Secretary says, that the £30,000,000 and the £35,000,000 are inextricably bound up together, then we ought to have some further information as to what chance, if any, there is that the agreement for the underwriting of this £10,000,000, which is to be the first instalment of the £30,000,000, will ever be completed. That £10,000,000 may be the only £10,000,000 of the £30,000,000 that we shall ever get, and it is extremely important that we should know what condition the agreement is in with regard to that.

Now one other point. The right hon. Gentleman the Colonial Secretary, when he introduced the Resolution upon which this Bill is founded, most ingeniously separated the income of the Transvaal and the Orange River Colonies into two portions. There was, he said, the common fund and the other revenue, and by taking one part of the common fund and adding it to the other revenue and one part of the other revenue and adding it to the common fund the right hon. Gentleman succeeded in making the whole disappear like cards in the hands of a brilliant prestidigitator, leaving nothing behind but rosy prospects. I do not think that is the way to deal with this matter. I think you should take the whole revenue. What is the whole revenue? There is the common fund, £2,500,000. That is derived from the profits arising from the railways, that is to say, the profits derived from the

£14,000,000 *plus* the £5,000,000 raised by this Bill that we are asked to provide for the purchase of the railways. This, then, is the contribution of the common fund. So that outside the £35,000,000, we are to pay £19,000,000 for the security for the £35,000,000. Returning to the revenue of the Transvaal, there is the common fund supposed to give £2,500,000, there is the Transvaal revenue proper of £4,500,000, that makes £7,000,000, and then there is the revenue of the Orange River Colony, £500,000, which brings the total revenue up to £7,500,000. But the Orange River Colony is not charged with any part of this loan; the Orange River Colony has made a separate arrangement; what the right hon. Gentleman called a hypothetical contribution of £5,000,000. So that what we have to deal with, therefore, is the £7,500,000 derived from the Transvaal, part of which this railway is to provide. You are to provide for £65,000,000 of new debt out of a revenue of £7,000,000. It is about the same as if you were to impose a new charge upon this country of £50,000,000 a year. In spite of all the rosy anticipations I believe it is almost a sinking weight to put on the revenues of these colonies.

There is one other most important point to which I must refer. The right hon. Gentleman the Colonial Secretary has told us that he has no doubt whatever that the Transvaal Legislature will do all that is necessary for carrying out the business portion of the £35,000,000 loan and will see to all that is necessary for the £30,000,000 loan. Yes, but at present it is a Crown colony. What does the right hon. Gentleman propose to do when it comes to take its place as a self-governing colony. Does he propose to saddle the Government of the Transvaal with this £65,000,000. If so, I am not sure that the position will be so good as it appears now. If you are going to give self-government to these colonies you must give them a right to say whether they will or will not assume this liability. It seems to me we are launching this loan and assuming this liability without proper guarantees. At present, you are dealing with a Legislature of your own nominees, who may agree at once to anything you propose, but it may happen that when the Transvaal and the Orange River Colony become self-governing colonies and have a large number of Boers in the Government that they may repudiate this liability altogether. It seems to me that you have not looked forward to what may happen under those circumstances. We are told that this enormous liability which the House is now asked to assume is only a portion of the liability which South Africa will have to bear; we know it is the heaviest burden that could be placed upon a country. It seems an interminable vista of debt, debt, debt, entered into without proper examination, to lay at the feet of the Chancellor of the Exchequer for the next few years, and I very much regret the prospect. Of course we must leave a certain amount of responsibility to the Government. We must believe that the Government have some ground for the brilliant anticipations they have formed of the future of the Transvaal and the Orange River Colony, but nothing I have read in the Blue-books or listened to in the speeches made in this House seems to me to afford adequate justification for the burdens we are going to place on these colonies.

MR. LAMBERT (Devonshire, South Molton): Those responsible for the government of South Africa seem to be afflicted with an incurable optimism, and to be always prophesying a boon that does not come, and this loan, I am afraid, is very much on that basis. It must be remembered that the revenues from the Transvaal and the railway receipts will not be larger for some years than they were during last year. The war stopped all business, and nothing was allowed to pass over the railway but military stores, and directly the war stopped all the goods which had accumulated passed over the railway. The Chancellor of the Exchequer has not been optimistic about the interest of the loan, and when he gets up I hope he will explain why it is that a loan guaranteed by the Imperial Government on the revenues of the Transvaal has been issued at 4 per cent., including the sinking fund, when he was able to promise the issue of about £112,000,000 or £120,000,000 on Irish land at only 3¼ per cent. In regard to land settlement in South Africa, I would urge the

Government not to be in too desperate a hurry in spending money for the purpose. So far as I can judge, according to the report presented to the Legislative Council a few days ago, the capital expended on land settlement up to June last amounted to £718,955, in addition to expenses of administration, while the number of the settlers is only 313. It seems to me the cardinal fact in regard to agriculture in these colonies that has been forgotten is that the healthy plateaux in the Transvaal and the Orange River Colony are 4,500 to 5,500 feet above the sea level, which will show to anyone acquainted with the subject that the extremes of climate are very great and must prove exceedingly hazardous to agricultural pursuits. In addition to this there is a drought prevalent at certain times of the year. I was informed by the manager of Mr. Rhodes' estate just outside Bulawayo that you may have a green crop growing, almost fit for harvest, and a hailstorm may come and render it worthless. In fact, this gentleman told me that he had had a crop of oats, of which he had reaped one-half, and the other half was devastated by a hailstorm before he was able to harvest it.

We have been told, by no one more eloquently than by the Colonial Secretary, that there is no reason why, with irrigation, the Orange River Colony and the Transvaal should not become as fertile as Egypt. I demur entirely to that statement. Egypt is practically on the sea level, and has none of these other adverse conditions to contend with. Moreover, in Egypt you have the Nile coming down in a fertilising flood, manuring the soil as it comes, whereas in these colonies whatever water you do collect will be clear or clarified water, by irrigation which will tend rapidly to exhaust the soil, and you will at once have to bring in manure, thereby increasing the cost of cultivation. That is one reason why I think people should not be led away by the example of Egypt. I have been told, also on most excellent authority, that in the Transvaal, the Orange River Colony, and also Rhodesia, you may have an excellent crop growing and the locusts will come and sweep the ground as bare as any road. My informant said that that had been his experience three years in succession. That is not a very encouraging prospect with which to tempt agricultural settlers. As regards cattle, I come upon the surer foundation of the documents of the Government themselves. In the Blue-book issued by the Government there is a despatch to Lord Milner by Mr. F. D. Smith, the agricultural adviser to the Transvaal Government, in which he says that the importation of cattle up till now has been a chronicle of disaster. Everybody who knows anything about cattle recognises that it would take cattle a considerable time to become acclimatised. Mr. F. D. Smith also states that the native stock is practically decimated, that many cattle diseases are endemic, and that there exist a large number of poisonous plants which are extremely dangerous to cattle. According to this gentleman, the country is infected with almost every form of contagious disease known to modern science — glanders, mange, rinderpest, pleuro-pneumonia, redwater, and scab. I contend that with all these disadvantages in the face of settlers, unless you are extremely careful in expending your money, the whole of your experiment will end in failure. We are told that these contagious diseases are to be curbed and curtailed by supervising the outbreaks, investigating the diseases, fencing the country, and so forth, but in view of the enormous distances to be traversed in these colonies, we know from our experience in England that it will be extremely difficult to eradicate the diseases. The Boers have been charged with being such backward farmers—so unprogressive and unproductive. But they have adapted themselves to the peculiar needs of the soil and climate of the Transvaal. Many Scotch and English emigrants went to the Transvaal before the war, and they had fallen into the same methods.

The Colonial Secretary said the land in these colonies has doubled in value. Why? First, there was the expectation of the boom that British occupation would bring. That boom lamentably failed. Then there is the significant circumstances that the Government themselves had been purchasing large tracts of land for agricultural settlement. The Boer may be as simple as is sometimes made out, but he knows the value of the land, and if the Government are in the market he will sell the land to them at a price. There is said to be a gigantic market for agricultural produce. That is an entire delusion. Before the war, Johannesburg consisted of 90,000 people. That is not a large market for so enormous an expanse of territory, and I have been told that if a large quantity of produce is brought in, the price immediately goes down because there is no demand. In my opinion the Transvaal and the Orange River Colony can never expect to compete with countries possessing the natural resources of Argentina and other parts of America. If there were an elected Legislature in the Transvaal to saddle themselves with this loan of land settlement, I would say by all means let them carry it out, but what are we going to do if the experiment is a failure, as I am afraid it will be? Are we to saddle the Boers with this large debt for an experiment which they distrust? It must not be forgotten that the Boer does not altogether believe in a lot of British being "dumped" down in order to take Boer land. I am afraid the scheme will exasperate a great many of the people. Personally I should not object to it if the people of the Transvaal approved of it, but as, they do not, I fear that any loss which might accrue will have to be borne by the British people. In my opinion the mining industry is the sole industry. Any attempt to plant agricultural settlers will end in failure, and the experiment will be at once costly and disastrous.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON (Dundee): I wish to direct the attention of the House to the financial questions involved in this Bill. May I say that we have been engaged in a debate which is altogether unreal? We talk about the control of this House over expenditure. What are we supposed to be here doing? Our assent is being asked to the issue of a loan which we are guaranteeing. But that loan was constituted nearly three months ago. More than ten weeks have elapsed since the Chancellor of the Exchequer issued his prospectus to expectant crowds in the City; the loan was oversubscribed, the allotment has been made, the transaction cannot be undone; and yet to-day we are being asked to give it our sanction. If we are to have many more Bills of this kind—and nobody knows how many we shall have to pass—we must have a change in the practice of the House with regard to the Resolutions from the Chair. The only occasion when there can be real and effective debate is when the Resolution is submitted in Committee. But when the Resolution is read, we do not know the terms of it, and we cannot tell what is in it. We must insist on having the terms of the Resolution some days beforehand, so that we can have a real discussion when the real decision is taken—viz., when the Resolution is submitted in Committee. This debate is unreal in another respect also. An entirely wrong account has been given of the nature of this transaction. We are going to guarantee this development loan of £35,000,000. In return for that, the Transvaal is to raise a loan of £30,000,000 as a contribution to our war debt. It is said by Lord Milner that the spending of this development money is absolutely necessary if we are to have any chance of getting the other. The one is the consideration for the other; the one depends upon the other. That is the description of the transaction which has been given from the beginning. This very day the Colonial Secretary spoke of the £30,000,000 as a gift from the Transvaal. Generally it has been spoken of as the contribution which the Transvaal is to make in return for the contribution we are making to-day. I propose to show that that is a wrong and delusive description of what we are doing.

First, let me say a word about the result. Putting it at its best, we are going to start these new colonies on their career with a debt of £65,000,000. After the unparalleled sacrifices we have made in connection with the war, we are going to add £35,000,000 to the contingent liabilities of this country, which, through the operations of the Government in every part of the Empire, are multiplying every day. Beyond that, we are threatened with—or promised—a further loan on the same terms and guaranteed in the same manner. What is the true nature of this transaction? Is there a contract at all? Can you honestly say there is a contract between this country and anybody else?

If there is a contract who is the other party to it? What is the Transvaal? The Transvaal is a country governed by a Government consisting of a Lieutenant-Governor, an Executive Council and a Legislative Council. All of them holding office absolutely at the will of the Colonial Secretary for the time being. It is absurd to set up a kind of *quasi* independence, because Lord Milner is not equal in power to the Colonial Secretary, and both Lord Milner and his Government are the mere instruments, of the right hon. Gentleman. To say we are giving this guarantee in return for something from the Transvaal is both an illusive and delusive description of what we are doing. If it is true that the Transvaal is not independent, then the right hon. Gentleman was using vague words when he said he was going to treat it as a self-governing colony. If what we are doing in regard to this Bill is being done by ourselves, then there will follow two consequences. The first is that this country is just as much liable for the £30,000,000 loan, which it does not guarantee, as it is for the £35,000,000 loan which it pretends to guarantee. It has been said that Crown colonies may borrow upon the strength of their own security, but that contention has been impugned by my hon. and learned friend, and I hope some answer will be given to it. By this Act you are raising a loan to be spent upon local purposes in that colony. Can anybody contend that this country could hold up its head amongst the nations if we had to resort in default to the belief that this loan was the act of the Transvaal? The conclusion which I ask the right hon. Gentleman either to accept or refuse is that we are making ourselves responsible not for one loan but for two loans, and that our liability for the £35,000,000 is even greater, though not technically so strong, because the £35,000,000 is for local purposes. The second consequence is equally serious. In what light will the Transvaal Legislature of the future regard these transactions? The Transvaal is a colony at this moment, but it is unlike any other because it is one which has the right to self-government at the earliest possible moment. It is not going too far to say that the title of the Crown in the Transvaal depends upon the terms of surrender made by an international instrument, creating international obligations, and that the inhabitants are entitled to say when the time comes to grant it that self-government is due to them. How will they look upon such a loan as this £30,000,000? The Colonial Secretary argued that no colony which repudiated a loan of this sort could be expected to be regarded with anything but suspicion in the markets of the world. That is all very well if the colony had been responsible for the loan. If Australia were to repudiate a loan made by itself that remark would be relevant and pertinent, but it is a mistake to treat the Transvaal Colony as if it were an independent outside authority acting independently. We have had a warning upon this point already. The other day there appeared in the papers a letter from General Botha, and he is not likely to speak in inflamed language either of his own country or of us. In his letter General Botha said that—

> "The main point to bear in mind was that an unprecedented war debt was placed upon the Transvaal against the expressed wishes of the burgher representatives and without the consultation or concurrence of a single section of the population of the country; and in the face of this Mr. Chamberlain recently declared at Birmingham that the representatives of every class in the Transvaal took upon themselves this burden of a war debt."

Here you have a leader of the people declaring in these strong words that no single section of the population had assented to the institution of this loan. That is a fair warning that when the right of self-government is given to the Transvaal there will be, at all events, one powerful body of the population, represented by their leader, who will take the objection I am now taking: that whatever may be the moral obligation of the Transvaalers to pay this loan, it cannot be based upon the fact that they have assented to its introduction now.

There is just one other financial point to which I think allusion has not been made. We have had a great deal said about the estimated surplus that is likely to be the result of the next few years government of the Transvaal. My hon. and learned friend has discussed the revenues expected from the railways, and the estimate, as far as I can see. is for the current year. Whatever estimate is made of the railway earnings is made on the strength of the experience of the first year after the war, when unusual conditions prevailed, conditions so unusual that no safe inference can be drawn from them as to the future. As to the surplus, it seems to me impossible to take in a rational way any account of surpluses in the Transvaal so long as it is a Crown colony dependent upon an army of occupation. This surplus is dependent for a long time on the presence in South Africa of a large portion of the English Army, and I think the cost of that Army is relevant to this point. The Secretary of State for War told me the other day that it was costing £110,000 a week at the present moment, and he added that that was about £45,000 more than if the same number of troops were kept at home. Since then new proposals have been suggested, and I will take the right hon. Gentleman's own figures. If you take the higher figure and charge South Africa, and the Transvaal in particular, with the cost of the maintenance of the present force, then you have an expenditure of £6,000,000 a year. How much of that is chargeable to the Transvaal is not for me to say, but the Transvaal being still a Crown colony it seems monstrous and absurd to talk of a surplus, because it leaves out of account the fact that it costs us perhaps £3,000,000, £4,000,000, or £5,000,000 to hold it. So long as the presence of our forces in South Africa is necessary to hold the Transvaal it appears to me to be only fair to count the cost of the military occupation, and we should not begin counting upon a surplus until we have allowed for this expenditure upon the military. That appears to me to be a fair point to make on the financial part of this question. The country is entitled to charge that to the other account and refuse to accept as real surpluses what is mentioned in the despatches of Lord Milner, and in speeches made by the right hon. Gentleman. I have said that this is an unreal debate because this transaction has taken place already and is an accomplished fact. This debate, however, may serve a useful purpose if it makes it clear to the country and to the House what is the real nature of the transaction with which we are dealing. The right hon. Gentleman may say that he has made a good bargain for the country, but I deny that he has made any bargain at all.

MR. BUCHANAN (Perthshire, E.): The Colonial Secretary, with regard to the purchase of the railways, has told us that the arrangements are not yet complete and that the sum of £30,000,000 mentioned in the Bill is only an estimate. We should like to know whether progress has been made with this transaction, and whether we have to consider ourselves bound by this estimate of £13,000,000 for the purchase of the railways. There is a further item I wish to mention which the Colonial Secretary in the month of May last left uncertain in the Papers he circulated—I allude to the claims which the military have against the Transvaal for certain repairs and other matters connected with the railways. He told us that it would amount to £300,000 or £1,000,000. I think we ought to be told what the sum is to be under the arrangement that has been arrived at. My right hon. friend the Member for West Monmouthshire asked a number of questions about the finances of the current year and last year on which the Colonial Secretary did not give a complete reply in the first week of May last. The Colonial Secretary said then that he estimated the railway revenue for the year ending the 30th of June at £2,500,000, and the general revenue at £4,500,000. Since that time the financial year in the Transvaal has come to an end, and I think we have a right to ascertain from the Government what the actual figures were. We ought also to ascertain from the Chancellor of the Exchequer what was the actual expenditure of the Transvaal during the year just ended. In order that we may be enabled to judge of the financial prospects of the future I think we ought to get the Budget of the current year as to the estimated revenue of the Transvaal from railways and from general sources. Surely we should also have an estimate of the expenditure for the current year. The revenue for the year just ended is probably an exceptional revenue owing to the amount of material going into the country at the conclusion of the war.

THE MASTER OF ELIBANK (Edinburgh, Midlothian): Can the right hon. Gentleman inform the House whether we have acquired the property of the Netherlands railway to Delagoa Bay? We were told that it was of considerable value and that it would be of advantage to acquire it.

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. RITCHIE, Croydon): The hon. Gentleman opposite has asked me about the Netherlands railway. I can only say that the negotiations are not actually concluded yet. With regard to the question of the hon. Member for Perthshire, so far as the revenue to the 30th of June last is concerned the railway revenue was estimated at £2,500,000, and the result comes out at £2,524,000. The general revenue was estimated at £4,700,000, and it has come out at £4,682,000. So far as the estimates for the next year are concerned I may say that we think that the estimates will be substantially the same and that the results will certainly approach the estimates we have formed.

MR. BUCHANAN: What about expenditure?

*MR. RITCHIE: As to the estimated expenditure I am unable to tell the hon. Gentleman what that will be, but I should not be surprised if it is slightly higher.

MR. BUCHANAN: Can the right hon. Gentleman tell us as to the £13,000,000 for the purchase of railways?

*MR. RITCHIE: As to that I cannot exactly say. The negotiations are drawing to a close and I am unable to give the hon. Gentleman any information except to say that I shall be very much surprised if the estimates we have formed are not sufficient for the purpose. The hon. Gentleman knows that the matter is one of some difficulty. The stocks and shares are held in a great many hands in many different quarters, and we can hardly yet form an exact estimate of what the amount will be. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Monmouthshire asked some questions with regard to the £30,000,000 loan, and I think he expressed surprise, that we had not entered so fully into particulars of that loan as the £35,000,000 loan. He wanted to know why we have not dealt at length with the mode in which the loan was to be launched and to be given full particulars with regard to it. He asked why there was no legislative sanction for the issue of that loan. The reason is simple. No legislative sanction is necessary in this country. A local ordinance is necessary and an ordinance has been prepared, and the Colonial Office is now in correspondence with the Treasury in regard to it. It will, I think, be finally settled in the next few days. The rate of interest, as the right hon. Gentleman knows, which was mentioned in the guarantee given for the first £10,000,000 was 4 per cent, but we do not pledge ourselves in the meantime as to what the interest will be when we issue it. It is quite true that so far as the guarantors are concerned, they have guaranteed the first £10,000,000 at 4 per cent., but the rate of interest is quite open to negotiation. Of course, if we vary the rate of interest, that is, if we make it less, we shall have to enter into negotiations, as indeed we are now entering into negotiations, with those who guaranteed the loan at 4 per cent. It will depend upon the circumstances when we come to consider the state of the money market.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: Will the right hon. Gentleman allow me to ask—Is the ordinance only to cover the £10,000,000 or is it to cover the whole sum?

*MR. RITCHIE: The whole sum.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: Then it will mention the rate of interest.

*MR. RITCHIE: The ordinance is not yet finally settled. The right hon. Gentleman will hardly expect me to inform the House now what the rate of interest will be—whether it will be 3½ or 4 per cent. It is really a matter which is not material to the issue we are now discussing. The right hon. Gentleman alluded to the mention made of the loan in this Bill and criticised our action in alluding to it and not going into it fully. The reason why we mention the matter in the Bill is because we consider it necessary to inform the House in the Bill how we propose to appropriate the money when we get it, and the right hon. Gentleman will be satisfied with the position we take up in that matter, namely, that when the £30,000,000 is obtained it will be used for the extinction of debt. It so happens that the amount of short securities created for war purposes is, I think, something like £37,000,000, and the amount of repayment for war purposes from the Transvaal is £30,000,000, which, with the other money which we are to receive from the guaranteed loan, will be almost exactly equal to the amount of short securities, and will be appropriated in the first instance for the payment of that debt. I have been asked by one or two Members who have spoken as to whether or not the Government undertake any liability in regard to the repayment of principal or interest of this £30,000,000 loan.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: Will that ordinance be laid on the Table before Parliament is prorogued?

*MR. RITCHIE: It cannot be laid on the Table before Parliament is prorogued. It has to be prepared here and sent to the Transvaal. It cannot be laid on the Table here before it receives the sanction of the Transvaal. The right hon. Gentleman will see that it would be impossible to lay that ordinance on the Table now. With regard to the liability of the Government the loan will be issued under the Colonial Stock Act of 1877, and I think the questions that have been asked on that subject are best answered by reading a portion of one of the sections of that Act.

> "Every prospectus and notice inviting persons to subscribe for or take the stock, and every stock certificate to bearer, and every coupon and dividend warrant, and every other certificate and document issued to a stockholder in relation to stock held by him, shall state that the revenues of the colony alone are liable in respect of the stock and the dividends thereon, and that the Consolidated Fund of the United Kingdom and the Commissioners of His Majesty's Treasury are not directly or indirectly liable or responsible for the payment of the stock or of the dividends thereon, or for any matter relating thereto."

It is therefore quite clear that neither directly nor indirectly does the Imperial Government become responsible for the debt.

MR. BUCHANAN: Not legally.

MR. LABOUCHERE: Will the right hon. Gentleman allow me to ask this question? Does the right hon. Gentleman not hold to the doctrine that we, generally, are responsible for all loans to Crown colonies?

*MR. RITCHIE: I have read to the House the terms on which all colonial loans are made, and it is perfectly clear that neither directly nor indirectly are we liable for principal or interest. But, Sir, while I am unable to answer the questions put by the hon. Gentleman I do not dispute the fact that there is a considerable moral obligation upon the Imperial Government with regard to the stock of any self-governing colony, but it is perfectly evident that there is no legal liability on this country in regard to the loan.

SIR ROBERT REID: Will the Chancellor of the Exchequer excuse me, as this is a very important point. If there is a moral obligation of any kind I cannot imagine a stronger one than this—when we get the money and use it, is it not a much wiser thing to accept the moral obligation and put it into legal form? For this reason, that you would get the money for 3 or 2¾ per cent. instead of four. I can understand that the moral obligation would suit the underwriters exceedingly well, but will it suit the British taxpayer?

*MR. RITCHIE: What is it that the right hon. and learned Gentleman desires us to do? To take upon our own shoulders the debts of all the Crown colonies? How could you take upon yourself such a responsibility as that with regard to this loan, and not also do the same with regard to all the other colonies?

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: Because you take the money.

*MR. RITCHIE: But is not the money justly due to us? This is an obligation which the colonies have willingly undertaken because they believe they ought. This is no attempt at a forced contribution from the colonies; they have undertaken it voluntarily. It would be quite unwarranted, and certainly quite unprecedented, to take upon ourselves any such obligation as the hon. Gentleman desires. We take our stand upon the Act—[AN HON. MEMBER: Like Shylock.]—of Parliament which regulates the issue of all colonial stocks for Crown colonies, and say that for us to have made any difference in this case would have been entirely wrong. We are not under any obligation whatever to depart from the usual practice. My hon. friend the Member for King's Lynn spoke with some suspicion about the negotiations with the guarantors of the £10,000,000, and asked if that implied any hitch. It was quite natural that we should enter into these negotiations with the guarantors, but there is not the slightest hitch of any kind whatever. The negotiations are being conducted in a perfectly friendly manner. My hon. friend seemed also to think that the colonies might repudiate their obligations under this loan when they became self-governing colonies. The hon. and learned Member for Dundee spoke very much in the same sense. It is rather remarkable how some hon. Gentlemen desire to lay stress on what they believe is the possibility of repudiation when the colonies become self-governing. I do not think myself that that is quite the right way of approaching this subject. I think it would be very much more in the interests of the colonies themselves if hon. Gentlemen would assume that the colonies intend to keep their promise rather than make suggestions to them, all of which seemed to imply that they would repudiate the bargains which they had made.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: My suggestion was based on Sub-section 4 of the Loan Act, which says that any Act which impairs the validity of the security shall be void. That suggested to my mind the possibility of the repudiation.

*MR. RITCHIE: I believe that is the common form used, and a very right and proper form; but the suggestion I am now referring to was rather more noticeable in the speech of the hon. and learned Member for Dundee than in that of my hon. friend.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: I drew a distinction between what a self-governing colony might do as to a loan contracted by itself in the past, and what it might do in the future as regards a loan contracted for it when it was not a self-governing colony.

*MR. RITCHIE: When these colonies are made self-governing, one of the conditions will be that they take over the liabilities incurred; and if they do that—which is one of the essential conditions of giving them self-government—the hon. Gentleman asks the House to assume that it is quite possible that they will repudiate the debt incurred and taken over. I do not believe they will do anything of the kind. On the contrary, I believe the assistance we are giving to the colonies by guaranteeing this undoubtedly large loan will be so productive of good to them that, so far from any attempt to repudiate any debt contracted in consequence, they will be the first to acknowledge that we have placed them under the greatest obligations in doing what we have done with a view to their future development. The hon. and learned Member for Dumfries asks—

"Why are we to do all this? Why cannot we let the colonies hugger-mugger on without any assistance of this kind? Why do we want to buy railways?"

We want to buy railways because we believe they will be a valuable source of revenue to the country. The right hon. and learned Gentleman says—

"Why raise all this money for development? Let them develop themselves."

We do not think it would be a right way of dealing with the colonies to let them develop alone. We have incurred, rightly, great obligations to the colonies. It is our bounden duty to do all we can by monetary assistance and otherwise to assist these colonies along a path of development which we have every reason to believe will be successful for them. Lord Milner, who has had great experience now in these colonies, believes that not only the mining industry will go on prosperously, but that railway development and other public works will enormously assist agriculture. I remember seeing in one of his despatches that, great as he believed to be the future of the mining industry of the Transvaal, he believed that agriculture and other industries would be of greater value in the future of the colonies than gold mining. It is with the view of assisting that development that we are finding for the Transvaal the money necessary for the purpose of building railways. I am sure the hon. and learned Gentleman would be wrong if he were to support a policy of inaction, and that it is better for us to incur, as we willingly incur, this financial responsibility, than to leave them alone to depend entirely on their own resources. Although some doubt has been thrown on the capacity of the Transvaal and Orange River Colony to pay interest on the loan, I am satisfied from a close investigation of the prospects of the Transvaal that there is ample security, and we need be under no apprehension that the money will not be forthcoming to pay the interest of the debt. The liability of £35,000,000 has already been undertaken by the country; and, although on the basis of the present revenue a deficit is shown when the interest on the whole £30,000,000 has to be provided, Lord Milner is fully persuaded that by that time there will be such a large development of the Transvaal that the country need be under no apprehension whatever that without any injury to the colonies themselves they will be able to meet the indebtedness which they are undertaking, and to pay the interest on the loan. I hope we may now be allowed to come to some conclusion upon this Bill, which I am satisfied is in the interests of the colonies and of this country.

Bill read a second time and committed for Wednesday.

Mr. Ritchie.

NAVAL WORKS BILL.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. J. W. Lowther (Cumberland, Penrith) in the Chair.]

Question proposed, "That the clause stand part of the Bill."

Mr. BUCHANAN said that the Amendment he had on the Paper raised a most important question. There was a substantial alteration in this Bill as compared with the four previous Naval Works Acts. The money borrowed under these previous Acts was to be paid off by terminable annuities which were all to expire at a date thirty years after the passing of the Act of 1895. In this Bill, for the first time, the annuities were to be paid off at varying periods acording to the time at which the money was borrowed. There were several objections to this proposal, not exclusively financial; and the financial objections were obvious. It was clear that this provision very largely extended the duration of time over which the country would be paying for the works included in the schedule. Possibly that might be a good thing with regard to larger works, but it was hardly capable of defence with regard to minor works. Hitherto it had only been assumed that the scheme which was started in 1895 had been supplemented; that it was looked upon as one continuous scheme for the completion of necessary Naval Defence Works. The Civil Lord of the Admiralty admitted that the items in the Bill were final, but that the amount was not. That was all the more reason why a fixed date should be assigned for the repayment of the loan. Surely it was absurd that money should be spread over an indefinite period of years for works in the schedule of the Bill, which undoubtedly could not be completed for ten or twelve years. He ventured to think that several of the works would not be completed for twenty years.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 1, line 15, to leave out from the word 'Act,' to end of line 19."—(*Mr. Buchanan.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the clause."

*THE CIVIL LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. PRETYMAN, Suffolk, Woodbridge) said he thought if the hon. Gentleman would look into the question further he would see that the effect of carrying out the policy of 1895, or rather the provisions of the Act of 1895, would land them in a very great financial difficulty. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Monmouthshire, who was Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1895, then stated that the principle of the Bill was to equalise expenditure by a well regulated system of loans. Many of the works mentioned in the schedule of the Bill might not be completed until 1910 or 1915; and if they borrowed the money as from 1895, the result would be that the rate of repayment over the period of ten years from 1915 to 1925 would, according to a calculation he had had made, be something approaching £3,000,000 a year. That would be an impossible burden on the Navy Estimates. If the hon. Gentleman made a calculation for himself he would see that the Bill was not really a departure from the principle of the Bill of 1895. It merely meant spreading the works over a longer period.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON (Dundee) said the hon. Gentleman had correctly quoted the speech of his right hon. friend the Member for West Monmouthshire, who was Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1895 when the first Naval Works Bill was brought in, and who said that the principle of the Bill was to equalise expenditure by a well-regulated system of loans. But the Committee had to interpret those words by the Act of 1895, which was to spread the repayments over a period of thirty years from the beginning of the system. An assurance was then given to the House that if they permitted them to begin a policy of borrowing for naval works the whole expenditure would end in thirty years. They did not, perhaps, anticipate the enormous development of naval works carried on by the Administration which succeeded theirs; but he thought it would be a departure if they now altered the period during which the repayments were to be made. He was glad to think that the works would be over by 1915. The result would be that between 1915 and 1925 they should have to pay something like £3,000,000 a year by way of interest and sinking fund. But considering the enormous additions that had already been made to the Navy he thought the hon. Gentleman ought not to be frightened at that expenditure. Personally he would be inclined to support the existing system, because it would involve the expenditure of £3,000,000 a year for interest and repayments of loans, and might thus conduce to economy on the part of the Admiralty.

MR. BUCHANAN said that the Amendment was one of very considerable importance. He had not made a calculation in the manner suggested by the Civil Lord of the Admiralty. They had already a sum of £500,000 for the extinction of terminable annuities; and he laid stress on the fact that they should insist on having some finality as regarded the repayment of the loans.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 173; Noes, 67. (Division List No. 189.)

AYES.

Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hn. Sir H.
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bailey, James (*Walworth*)
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (*Manch'r*
Balfour, Capt. C. B. (*Hornsey*
Balfour, Rt Hn Gerald W (*Leeds*
Balfour, Kenneth R. (*Christch*
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benj.
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Arthur
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith-
Bull, William James
Butcher, John George
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H
Cavendish, R. F. (*N. Lancs.*)
Cavendish, V. C. W. (*Derbyshire*
Cecil, Evelyn (*Aston Manor*)
Chamberlain, Rt Hon J (*Birm*
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J A (*Worc*
Chapman, Edward
Charrington, Spencer
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coddington, Sir William

Coghill, Douglas Harry
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Colomb,Sir JohnCharlesReady
Colston, Chas. Edw H. Athole
Cook, Sir Frederick Lucas
Corbett, T. L. (*Down, North*)
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Cross, Herb. Shepherd (*Bolton*
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley-
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dimsdale, Rt. Hon. Sir Jos. C
Dixon-Hartland, Sir F. Dixon
Dorington, Rt. Hon. Sir J. E.
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Dyke, Rt. Hon. Sir Wm. Hart
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Faber, George Denison (*York*)
Fellowes,Hon.Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson,RtHn.SirJ.(*Manc'r*
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
Fitzroy,Hon.EdwardAlgernon
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Flower, Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster,PhilipS.(*Warwick,S.W*
Fyler, John Arthur
Gardner, Ernest
Gibbs,HnA.G.H(*City of Lond*
Gordon,Hn.J.E.(*Elgin & Nrn*
Gore,Hn.GR.C.Ormsby-(*Salop*
Gorst, Rt. Hn. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, Hon George Joachim
Grenfell, William Henry
Hain, Edward
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hamilton,RtHnLordG(*Midd'x*
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Hatch, Ernest Frederick G.
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heaton, John Henniker
Henderson, Sir Alexander
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
Hoult, Joseph
Howard, Jno (*Kent, Faver'h'm*
Howard, J. (*Midd., Tott'ham*
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Jeffreys, Rt. Hon. ArthurFred.
Jessel,Captain HerbertMerton
Kemp, Lieut.-Colonel George
Kenyon, Hon. G. T. (*Denbigh*
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W.(*Salop*
Keswick, William
Kimber, Henry
Lambton,Hon.Frederick Wm.
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (*Glasgow*
Lawrence, Wm. F. (*Liverpool*
Lawson,JohnGrant(*Yorks.NR*
Lee, A. H. (*Hants, Fareham*)
Lees, Sir Elliott (*Birkenhead*)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Fredk. N. S.
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Rt. Hn. W. (*Bristol, S.*
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowther, Rt. Hon. Jas. (*Kent*)
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas, Col. Francis (*Lowestoft*
Lucas,Reginald J.(*Portsmouth*
Lyttelton, Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
M'Arthur, Charles (*Liverpool*)
Malcolm, Ian
Maxwell,RtHn.SirHE(*Wigt'n*
Montagu, G. (*Huntingdon*)
Morgan,DavidJ(*Walthamstow*
Morrell, George Herbert
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Murray,RtHnA.Graham(*Bute*
Murray, Charles J. (*Coventry*)
Murray,Col. Wyndham (*Bath*)
Nicholson, William Graham
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
Peel,Hn.Wm.RobertWellesley
Pemberton, John S. G.
Percy, Earl
Pilkington, Colonel Richard
Plummer, Walter R.
Pretyman, Ernest George
Purvis, Robert
Rattigan, Sir William Henry
Reid, James (*Greenock*)
Renshaw, Sir Charles Bine
Ritchie,Rt. Hn. Chas.Thomson
Robertson, H. (*Hackney*)
Rolleston, Sir John F. L.
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford-
Sadler, Col. Saml. Alexander
Samuel, Harry (*Limehouse*)
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Seely, Chas. Hilton (*Lincoln*)
Seely,Maj.JEB.(*Isle of Wight*
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Shaw-Stewart,M.H.(*Renfrew*)
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Sinclair, Louis (*Romford*)
Smith, Abel H. (*Hertford, E.*)
Stanley, Edw. Jas. (*Somerset*)
Stanley, Lord (*Lancs.*)
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Talbot, Lord E. (*Chichester*)
Talbot,RtHnJ.G. (*Oxf'd Univ.*
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tritton,Charles Ernest
Tufnell, Lieut.-Col. Edward
Valentia, Viscount
Walrond,Rt.Hn.SirWilliamH.
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Webb,Colonel William George
Whiteley,H(*Ashton-und-Lyne*
Williams,RtHnJPowell-(*Birm*
Wilson,A.Stanley(*York,E.R.*
Wilson, John (*Glasgow*)
Worsley-Taylor,HenryWilson
Wortley, Rt.Hon. C.B. Stuart-
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Asher, Alexander
Asquith, Rt. Hon. Herbt. Hy.
Atherley-Jones, L.
Barlow, John Emmott
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Brigg, John
Broadhurst, Henry
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Cameron, Robert
Causton, Richard Knight
Channing, Francis Allston
Cremer, William Randal
Crooks, William
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, M.Vaughan- (*Cardign*
Dewar,JohnA.(*Inverness-shire*
Dunn, Sir William
Elibank, Master of
Evans,SirFrancisH(*Maidstone*
Foster, Sir Walter (*Derby Co.*
Fuller, J. M. F.
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Grant, Corrie
Griffith, Ellis J.
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Chas. Seale-
Hayter, Rt Hon Sir Arthur D.
Horniman, Frederick John
Hutchinson,Dr.Charles Fredk.
Jacoby, James Alfred
Joicey, Sir James
Jones,DavidBrynmor(*Swansea*
Jones, William (*Carnarvonsh.*
Lawson,Sir Wilfrid (*Cornwall*)
Levy, Maurice
Lloyd-George, David
Macnamara, Dr. Thomas J.
M'Arthur, William (*Cornwall*
Moulton, John Fletcher
Palmer,SirCharlesM.(*Durham*
Partington, Oswald
Paulton, James Mellor
Perks, Robert William
Rea, Russell
Reid,SirR.Threshie(*Dumfries*)
Roberts, John Bryn (*Eifion*)
Robertson, Edmund (*Dundee*)
Rose, Charles Day
Samuel, Herbert L. (*Cleveland*
Schwann, Charles E.
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Thomas (*Hawick, B.*)
Sinclair, John (*Forfarshire*)
Spencer,RtHn.C.R(*Northants*
Taylor, Theo. C. (*Radcliffe*)

Thomas, David A. (*Merthyr*)
Toulmin, George
Ure, Alexander
Walton, J. Lawson (*Leeds, S.*)
Wason, Eugene (*Clackmannan*)
Wason, John Cathcart (*Orkney*
White, Luke (*York, E. R.*)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wilson, H. J. (*York, W. R.*
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—
Mr. Buchanan and Mr. Caldwell.

Clause 1 agreed to.

Clause 2 agreed to.

MR. BUCHANAN said that the question that he raised on this Amendment was the propriety of having such large general items in the schedule of a Bill of this kind. What they had always contended for had been the policy of borrowing money for definite work of a permanent character and entailing considerable expense at a particular time. The general proposal to vote £1,000,000 or £1,250,000 for deepening harbours and approaches gave enormous latitude to the spending Department of the Admiralty. They had evidence that under this large item of deepening harbours and approaches all sorts and kinds of comparatively small works might be embarked upon, not merely deepening and dredging harbours but buying dredgers for the purpose, and other matters which could not be looked upon as a proper method of spending money which we had borrowed. The Civil Lord had stated that the Government had in this Bill come to the determination that although the money was not final the items were final. Were the smaller items included in these larger items to be final or would the Government consider itself entitled in years to come to insert under the larger heads new works, because, if they did, that would do away to a large extent with the assurance given by the hon. Gentleman. It was obvious that if the Government were still to be entitled to insert new sub-heads and new works under the larger heads of items that that must be so. He begged to move the Amendment.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 2, to leave out lines 20 and 21."—(*Mr. Buchanan.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the schedule."

*SIR JOHN COLOMB (Great Yarmouth) said he did not altogether agree with the hon. Gentleman who raised this question. Deepening harbours was highly necessary owing to the increased draught of ships and to silting up of channels, and he did not see how such a matter could be dealt with from year to year. They must make arrangements a long way ahead.

*MR. PRETYMAN said the hon. Gentleman who moved the Amendment did not realise that this item must be of a general nature, because dredging was carried on by one body from harbour to harbour. So far as the control of Parliament was concerned, that was better secured by adding to this Vote every two years than by taking a large sum in the first instance and coming to this House every two years and having it renewed. And it must be remembered that dredging harbours was not a work carried on by only one service. It embraced several services. He did not wish to weary the Committee with details. The matter had been placed fully before the House in the Memorandum of the First Lord. As to the question of finality all he could say was that this Bill had been before the House on four or five previous occasions and had always had the approval of the House. When they came to the final Bill he hoped all the work would be completed.

MR. BUCHANAN asked whether any new works would be added.

*MR. PRETYMAN said there would probably be a considerable addition for improving the access at Chatham.

SIR JAMES JOICEY (Durham, Chester-le-Street) objected to the expenditure of such large sums on the deepening of water-beds and so forth without the places being clearly stated. There were harbours on the East Coast in connection with which enormous sums had been spent for the very purpose for which the money now asked for was required; and the Government benefited by all this work without paying anything towards the cost. He believed a promise was made on behalf of the Government to contribute £250,000 towards the work on the Tyne, but the Tyne Commissioners, although they had spent nearly £5,000,000, had never been able to get a farthing out of the Government. He hoped the hon. Member in charge of the Bill would look into the matter and see why the promise had not been fulfilled.

*MR. PRETYMAN pointed out that this money was for purely naval harbours.

MR. BUCHANAN asked whether the hon. Member reserved to himself power to put in the schedule only work for deepening the approaches at Chatham, or a general power of inserting new items.

*MR. PRETYMAN said there was a general power, but he merely expressed the hope that it would not be necessary to add any item other than that connected with Chatham.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON asked whether the hon. Member would give an assurance that no new item other than the one referred to would be added.

*MR. PRETYMAN said he was unable to give the assurance. He could only express the hope that it would not be necessary to add anything else.

Question put, and agreed to.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) moved the omission from the schedule of the item relating to dockyard extension at Gibraltar. Not only would the work, if carried out, be dangerous in itself, but it would make Gibraltar a weakness instead of a strength to the Empire. The highest authorities had declared it to be impossible to make Gibraltar, with the new works on the western side, tenable unless we had a separate army of 30,000 or 40,000 men to occupy the 600 square miles of territory opposite. The Civil Lord would not deny that that was the settled opinion of the best military authorities. The gravity of the matter had greatly increased within the last few days, as Señor Silvela on the eve of giving up office, had made use in the Spanish Cortes of expressions which had been taken by the Spanish newspapers to amount to a declaration of an alliance with France. Señor Silvela stated that Gibraltar would be the centre of any fighting which took place over questions arising in or about the Mediterranean. The Admiralty had put forward all sorts of pretences in this matter. First they said it was impossible to build a harbour on the eastern side of Gibraltar because the water was too deep, but he pointed out that it was equally deep on the other side. Then they said the weather was so bad that work could be done only one day in two, but that pretence had been blown to the winds by their own Commission. The contention that a harbour on the eastern side would cost £10,000,000 and take twenty years to build had also been demolished. His endeavour had always been to save money from the western side in order to get a more secure harbour on the eastern side, but he had been unable to induce the Admiralty to accept either his views or the views of their own experts. He was afraid that most serious embarrassments would arise from a continuance of this expenditure. Some day His Majesty's Government might find that Gibraltar in consequence of the foolish expenditure of £4,000,000 or £5,000,000, instead of being a source of strength would be a source of weakness. It would be the objective against which every enemy of England would direct their guns; therefore, he thought a profound mistake had been committed. He agreed that it was right to build one dock and to expend £1,500,000 upon it, but when it was proposed to spend £4,500,000 upon three docks he began to oppose the scheme. All that he had contended about Gibraltar had been completely borne out by the most capable expert at the Admiralty. The necessity for a large Army to defend Gibraltar had been completely overlooked. The whole of this expenditure would not be advantageous, but mischievous.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 2, to leave out line 24."—(*Mr. Gibson Bowles.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the schedule."

*MR. PRETYMAN said this question had been fully discussed on previous occasions both in this House and in another place. The hon. Member for King's Lynn had taken great interest in this matter, and both the House and the country were indebted to him for the light he had thrown upon it. This was a question of the percentage of security. The east side of the rock was precipitous, and it would be impossible to locate any establishment on that side which would be secure from fire. Therefore, the only thing that could be erected on the east side which would be really secure would be one dock. Even then the approach to that dock would be exposed to fire. It was pointed out by the Committee that while the proposed harbour on the east side would not be exposed to concentrated fire from the shore, it would not be free from gun fire altogether. They had to face the fact that in view of the very long range of artillery fire Gibraltar had not that absolute security which some people imagined. It was, however, of immense value to the Navy not only in time of war, but during preparation for war, and he could not follow his hon. friend in the argument that while one dock was most desirable three were quite unnecessary. The large protective works being constructed were just as effective for the protection of three as for one dock, and therefore the proportionate expenditure was by no means so great. He could not follow his hon. friend in his remarks as to the opinions expressed by experts on this question. At any rate, the opinions he had mentioned had not reached the Admiralty in the form that he had put them to the Committee. On the contrary, these opinions were entirely in a contrary sense. He did not think any ground had been made out to induce the Committee to reverse the decision already arrived at.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES said that although it was true that the eastern side, according to theoretical statistics, was not absolutely free from fire, the Committee reported that the eastern side was fourteen times as secure as the western side. The hon. Member for Woodbridge affected not to know anything about the report which stated that they must have a separate army. He could not believe that the hon. Member was ignorant of that report. The report was in the hands of Admiral Rawson, and the Committee of which he (the hon. Member) was a member and he had the best of all reasons for knowing that it had been communicated to the Admiralty. If the hon. Member had not seen it he should apply to the Secretary of State for War and then state how he proposed to find that separate army of 30,000 or 40,000 men which they were told was the only way to make Gibraltar tenable. He begged leave to withdraw his Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

MR. BUCHANAN said he raised a similar question to that which was discussed in reference to the harbour approaches. Certain statements were made in the First Lord of the Admiralty's annual statement about a variety of works, but they had not had any enumeration or record of the works that were being undertaken by the Admiralty under this Bill. The Civil Lord enumerated certain works including work at Wei-hai-Wei, and he mentioned other works and other places which were not mentioned by the First Lord of the Admiralty. The result was that the House and the Committee were absolutely in the dark as to the way in which this large sum of money was being spent. Every two years they authorised the Admiralty to spend up to a maximum for coaling facilities and fuel storage at home and abroad, but they got no statement as to what works were being undertaken, and their cost, or when they were going to be completed. If the hon. Member could tell them of some settled scheme for the disposal of this money, and inform them that no other work would be added, that would meet the demands they had made.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 2, to leave out line 35."—(*Mr. Buchanan.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the schedule."

*Mr. PRETYMAN said he did not think the hon. Member was in the House when he made his statement upon this Bill. In a long speech which he was allowed to inflict upon the House, he detailed all the works, and the House approved of those items. The hon. Member asked that there should be specific items, and that was exactly what had been done. He had a specific list of the works totalling up to the sum which was now being asked for, and there was nothing vague about it. Unless it was the wish of the House, he would not inflict all those items on the Committee, but if the hon. Member wished it, he should have great pleasure in showing him the figures, and he would then see that definite sums were allotted, and the works would be completed for the sums he was asking for.

Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON said that what his hon. friend wanted was an assurance that no new items would be introduced. If some such assurance was forthcoming he would not advise his hon. friend to take the opinion of the Committee upon this question. Otherwise he thought his hon. friend ought to go to a division.

*Mr. PRETYMAN said he must adhere to the specific pledge he had already given. The amount for the item now stood at £1,250,000. He understood the hon. Gentleman to ask a pledge that that would not be increased in future by the addition of any sub-item. He hoped there would be no necessity to make any further addition to this item, but he could not give a definite pledge, because it was perfectly clear that it would not be in the interest of the Navy to do so. He asked the hon. Gentleman to suppose that such a pledge were given, and that he, finding himself at the Admiralty in the future, considered it necessary to make an addition, would he thank him for having given the pledge?

Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON: Yes.

*Mr. PRETYMAN said he hoped not. The hon. Gentleman would see that it was impossible for him to give a definite pledge.

Mr. WHITLEY (Halifax) asked whether the list specifying the expenditure under this item would come before the Comptroller and Auditor-General, and whether he could report to the House on the expenditure of the money. What was required was that this £1,250,000 should not be looked upon by the Admiralty as merely a lump sum to be devoted as they pleased. The Committee required a clear assurance that, apart from unforeseen exigencies, the money would be devoted strictly to the purposes stated in the schedule of the Bill.

*Mr. PRETYMAN said all the figures would be placed before the Comptroller and Auditor-General, and he would report to the House any departure from the original proposal.

Question put.

The Committee divided: Ayes, 167; Noes, 62. (Division List No. 190.)

AYES

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bailey, James (*Walworth*)
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (*Manch'r*
Balfour, Rt. Hn. G. W. (*Leeds*
Balfour, Kenneth R. (*Christch.*
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bignold, Arthur
Bigwood, James
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith-
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Bull, William James
Butcher, John George
Carson, Rt. Hn. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, R. F. (*N. Lancs.*)
Cavendish, V C W (*Derbysh.*)
Cecil, Evelyn (*Aston Manor*)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J. (*Birm.*)
Chamberlain, Rt Hn. J. A (*Worc.*
Chapman, Edward
Charrington, Spencer
Clare, Octavius Leigh
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Colomb, Sir John Charles Ready
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Cook, Sir Frederick Lucas
Corbett, T. L. (*Down, North*)
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley-
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dimsdale, Rt. Hon. Sir Jos. C.
Dixon-Hartland, Sir Fred Dixon
Dorington, Rt. Hon. Sir J. E.

Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Duke, Henry Edward
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Dyke, Rt. Hon. Sir William Hart
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Faber, George Denison (*York*)
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Ed.
Fergusson, Rt Hon. Sir J. (*Man'r*
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
Fitzroy, Hon. Edward Algernon
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Flower, Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Philip S. (*Warwick, S. W*
Fuller, J. M. F.
Fyler, John Arthur
Gardner, Ernest
Godson, Sir Augustus Frederick
Gore, Hn G. R. C. Ormsby-(*Salop*
Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Grenfell, William Henry
Hall, Edward Marshall
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hamilton, Rt Hn Lord G. (*Midd'x*
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
Hoult, Joseph
Houston, Robert Paterson
Howard, Jno (*Kent, Faver'hm*
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Jeffreys, Rt. Hn. Arthur Fred
Jessel, Capt. Herbert Merton
Kemp, Lieut.-Colonel George
Kenyon, Hon. G. T. (*Denbigh*
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W. (*Salop.*
Keswick, William
King, Sir Henry Seymour
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (*Glasgow*
Lawrence, Wm. F. (*Liverpool*
Lawson, J. Grant (*Yorks., N.R.*)
Lee, A. H. (*Hants, Fareham*)
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N. S.
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Rt. Hn. W. (*Bristol, S.*
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Francis William
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas, Col. Francis (*Lowestoft*)
Lucas, Reginald J. (*Portsmouth*)
Lyttelton, Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
M'Arthur, Charles (*Liverpool*)
Maxwell, Rt Hn Sir H. E. (*Wigt'n*
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
Montagu, G. (*Huntingdon*)
Morgan, David J. (*Walth'mst'w*)
Morrell, George Herbert
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Muntz, Sir Philip A.
Murray, Rt Hn A. Graham (*Bute*
Murray, Charles J. (*Coventry*)
Nicholson, William Graham
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
Parker, Sir Gilbert
Parkes, Ebenezer
Pease, H. Pike (*Darlington*)
Peel, Hn Wm. Robert Wellesley
Pemberton, John S. G.
Percy, Earl
Pierpoint, Robert
Pilkington, Col. Richard
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Walter R.
Pretyman, Ernest George
Purvis, Robert
Rattigan, Sir William Henry
Reid, James (*Greenock*)
Renshaw, Sir Charles Bine
Ridley, S. F. (*Bethnal Green*)
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. C. Thomson
Robertson, Herbert (*Hackney*)
Rolleston, Sir John F. L.
Runciman, Walter
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford-
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Samuel, Harry S. (*Limehouse*)
Seely, Chas. Hilton (*Lincoln*)
Seely, Maj. J. E. B. (*Isle of Wight*
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Sinclair, Louis (*Romford*)
Smith, Abel H. (*Hertford, E.*)
Smith Hn. W. F. D. (*Strand*)
Stanley, Lord (*Lancs.*)
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Taylor, Austin (*East Toxteth*)
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Valentia, Viscount
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt. Hn Sir William H.
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Webb, Col. William George
Whiteley, H. (*Ashton und. Lyne*
Wilson, John (*Glasgow*)
Worsley-Taylor, Henry Wilson
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Asher, Alexander
Atherley-Jones, L.
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Brigg, John
Broadhurst, Henry
Bryce, Right Hon. James
Burns, John
Caldwell, James
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Causton, Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Channing, Francis Allston
Cremer, William Randal
Crooks, William
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, M. Vaughan-(*Cardigan*
Dewar, John A. (*Inverness-sh.*)
Evans, Sir F. H. (*Maidstone*)
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Foster, Sir Walter (*Derby Co.*)
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert J.
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Grant, Corrie
Griffith, Ellis J.
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Chas. Seale-
Holland, Sir William Henry
Horniman, Frederick John
Hutchinson, Dr. Charles Fredk.
Jones, David Brynmor (*Swansea*
Jones, Wm. (*Carnarvonshire*)
Kearley, Hudson E.
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (*Cornwall*)
Levy, Maurice
Lough, Thomas
M'Arthur, Wiliam (*Cornwall*)
Partington, Oswald
Perks, Robert William
Reid, Sir R. Threshie (*Dumfries*
Roberts, John Bryn (*Eifion*)
Robertson, Edmund (*Dundee*)
Samuel, Herbt. L. (*Cleveland*)
Schwann, Charles E.
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Thomas (*Hawick, B.*)
Sinclair, John (*Forfarshire*)
Spencer, Rt Hn. C. R. (*Northants*
Taylor, Theodore C. (*Radcliffe*)
Thomas, David Alfred (*Merthyr*
Thomson, F. W. (*York, W. R.*)
Tomkinson, James
Toulmin, George
Ure, Alexander
Wason, John Cathcart (*Orkney*
Weir, James Galloway
White, Luke (*York, E. R.*)
Whiteley, G. (*York, W. R.*)
Whitley, J. H. (*Halifax*)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wilson, Henry J. (*York, W. R.*)

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Buchanan and Sir James Joicey.

MR. BUCHANAN said the next item related to a very important point because it was an innovation as compared with previous Bills. For the first time the large item of £50,000 was inserted in the schedule for Chatham Dockyard extension, and no estimate of the total cost of the work undertaken was given. It had been the invariable practice to submit to Parliament an estimate of the total cost of the work for which the initial expenditure was being asked in a Naval Works Bill.

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Committee report Progress; to sit again this evening.

EVENING SITTING.

NAVAL WORKS BILL.

(Considered in Committee.)

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith) in the Chair.]

Schedule:—

MR. BUCHANAN, continuing his remarks, complained that as the Estimates stood they did not show the total estimated cost of the works undertaken at Chatham Dockyard. This marked a very serious departure from all the precedents of former Naval Works Bills or Acts. Hitherto it had been the invariable practice with regard to all specific works entered in these Acts that a sum should be inserted in the first column to give the House and the country an idea of the best estimate the Admiralty could give of the total estimated cost. They did not expect an estimate that could be absolutely relied on. They knew that with works of this sort, which took several years to carry out and involved an expenditure of £1,000,000 or £2,000,000 it was impossible to be accurate. But what the House would like to know was the best estimate the Admiralty could form of the total cost of the work the House was asked to sanction expenditure for. Hitherto the first column had approximately represented the total commitment of the country in the Naval Works Act, and if that column were omitted its value for purposes of comparison was seriously impaired. In this case the land belonged to the naval authorities, and the objection about giving too much information about the purchase of land did not therefore apply. Surely the Admiralty could not have embarked on a considerable extension of one of their large dockyards without having a rough-and-ready idea of what the expense was to be, and what the cost would be upon the finances of the country. He asked that some estimate of the work that was being undertaken should be inserted in the schedule. He begged to move.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 2, to leave out line 36."—(*Mr. Buchanan.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the schedule."

*MR. PRETYMAN said it was quite true that on the Second Reading of this Bill the point was made by the hon. Member for Perthshire and the hon. Member for Dundee, that a departure had been made in old practice with regard to this Bill. But there was a great difference between this Bill and preceding Bills of a like character. It was clear that in a large item of this description, which embraced very large and very various works, no estimate could be absolutely final; but in the debate on the Second Reading the hon. Member for Dundee pressed him to have this question carefully investigated before the Committee stage, and to present some sort of estimate as nearly as he could. He had seen that that was done, and the probable cost of these works, which would effect a complete revolution in Chatham Dockyard and bring it in all respects up to the level of the most up-to-date yards, would be £4,500,000. If that figure, however, were inserted in the schedule now, it would involve an Amendment which would give an opening for discussion on the Report stage — [Cries of "Why not?"]—and he hoped, therefore, that there would be a full opportunity for discussion now, and as he thought he had met hon. Members very fairly, it was reasonable to ask for an understanding that if the figure of £4,500,000 were inserted now, there should be no debate upon the Report stage.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON thought that his hon. friend might be very well content with the success of his Motion, the hon. Gentleman opposite having practically met his Amendment, but it was not reasonable that the Civil Lord should ask, as a condition of this particular being inserted in the schedule now, that there should be an understanding that there should be no debate on the Report stage.

*MR. PRETYMAN: I meant upon the whole Bill.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON said that only Amendments could be discussed upon the Report stage. They now knew for the first time the vast extent of these proposals, and it was not reasonable to ask the Committee either to discuss them now or to abstain from discussing them on the Report stage.

*MR. PRETYMAN said if the hon. Gentleman only proposed to discuss this point on Report that was one thing, but to raise a discussion on the whole Bill was a totally different thing.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON said they could not bind the House in a matter of this kind, but the Committee were sensible of the fact that the hon. Gentleman had complied with the Amendment of the hon. Member for Perthshire and he would have no desire to needlessly prolong the discussion. He hoped the hon. Gentleman would allow these figures to go into the schedule and then they could let the Report stage take its course.

MR. WHITLEY thought the Committee could hardly realise the immense importance of the statement just made from the Treasury Bench. If they took this Vote of £50,000 it involved, as they now knew, a total expenditure of £4,500,000. He could not agree to allowing this £4,500,000 to be inserted in the schedule now, because they would thereby be specifically approving of expenditure to that amount on Chatham Dockyard. The question was bound up with the new naval base in Scotland, of which they did not yet know the cost, but which he supposed they could put down at £10,000,000, and it was a question how far they ought to go on reforming the old dockyards, such as Chatham. Surely the Committee never knew that all these millions were going to be expended on Chatham.

*SIR JOHN COLOMB said he thought the hon. Gentleman who moved the Amendment ought to be quite satisfied with the nature of the work proposed to be carried out at Chatham. He himself regretted that the Civil Lord had gone so far as to offer to insert details in the Vote now. He had not gathered from the hon. Gentleman when he estimated that these works would be completed.

*MR. PRETYMAN: About 1910.

*SIR JOHN COLOMB said in that case the expenditure would be spread over seven years. His own impression was that these extensions were unavoidable. It must be years and years before Rosyth became available, and in the meantime the Fleet was growing.

MR. BUCHANAN said he accepted with gratitude the statement made by the Civil Lord of the Admiralty, who had endeavoured fairly to meet the contention he had put forward mainly, as the hon. Gentleman knew, on financial grounds. He should therefore be perfectly prepared to withdraw his Amendment provided that the hon. Gentleman would insert the sum of £4,500,000 in the first column. He hoped the hon. Gentleman would also endeavour to meet him with regard to some of the other items in the schedule. With regard to the condition the hon. Gentleman laid down, he could only speak for himself, and he should certainly not raise this question at any future stage of the Bill. If they only got the Bill restored in part to the form of previous Naval Works Bills on the Statute-book they would have made a substantial change for the better.

MR. DALZIEL (Kirkcaldy Burghs) expressed his surprise that this work should come to £4,500,000. What was the position before the Committee now? But for the indefatigable industry of the hon. Member for Perthshire this Vote might have passed utterly unknown, with the result that the Committee without knowledge might have pledged itself to an expenditure of £4,500,000.

He did not question but that a very good case might be made out for this expenditure, but he had not heard any such case made out. He complained of the slipshod and casual way in which such a large expenditure was launched.

Mr. WHITLEY invited the Chancellor of the Exchequer to say whether, when the item of £50,000 was submitted to the Treasury, the sum of £4,500,000 was mentioned as being involved in the total cost of the works at Chatham.

*The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. Ritchie, Croydon) said that no final plans had been made out for the improvement of Chatham Dockyard, and therefore it was impossible to say what was likely to be the ultimate expenditure. He agreed that expenditure ought to be based on some calculation, and on some plans.

Mr. DALZIEL: Are the plans prepared yet?

*Mr. RITCHIE said they were not yet finally prepared. It was impossible in this case for final plans to be prepared, because the work was extremely large. Of course there were plans, but no final plans; and therefore he did not think it advisable to put down any total sum in the Bill because it might be misleading to the House. His hon. friend, however, after looking into this matter very carefully, had come to the conclusion that he was well within the mark in naming £4,500,000, and therefore he saw no reason why this sum proposed to be taken should not be placed in the schedule if the Committee wished it. But his reason for not consenting to the insertion of the total sum was that he had not before him material for concluding that there would be an expenditure of £4,500,000, and because he was anxious not to mislead the Committee. He doubted very much whether any serious portion of the expenditure would be entailed within the period to which the Bill extended.

Mr. BROADHURST, (Leicester) said that after the very important statement of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, he did not think the Committee could be asked to santion any sum for the proposed scheme at Chatham. The Admiralty authorities had put down £50,000 under pressure of the Treasury, and now the Chancellor of the Exchequer said that there were no plans.

*Mr. RITCHIE; No final plans.

Mr. BROADHURST said he knew about engineers, and their plans and schemes. He never trusted them farther than he could throw a cow by its tail in matters of expenditure. If they once gave engineers a credit to commence their work there was no limitation to the Bill which they would run up. It was monstrous that the Admiralty should come down with £50,000 on paper, and say that they were willing to withdraw that sum on condition that the Committee would agree to insert £4,500,000 for works of which no settled plans were prepared. Probably three or four different engineers would be employed by the Government, and there was no guarantee that the whole scheme would cost only £4,500,000. They were spending over £4,000,000 at Keyham, and they were going to spend £4,000,000 or £5,000,000 on another dockyard in Scotland. This was too bad even for this Government. He had never heard a weaker case in his life. Thanks were due to the Chancellor of the Exchequer for his exposure of this slipshod method of doing the Admiralty business. The Admiralty was one of the most difficult, and probably one of the most wasteful, Government Departments, and the public had the least control over it, because it was always mystified with expert advice. Why should the Committee be asked to give a Vote for works about which they knew nothing? They had no assurance even as to whether the riverway was to be improved.

*Mr. PRETYMAN said he had explained that a short time ago.

Mr. BROADHURST said he had heard the hon. Gentleman talk about dredging and improving the bottom of the river from the Thames up to Chatham dockyard; but he was sure that if the Committee sanctioned the enlargement of the dockyard up to the value of £4,500,000, it would undoubtedly cost ultimately £6,000,000 or £7,000,000. He thought the Committee was not being treated quite fairly by the Admiralty.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs) said that the moral of the discussion seemed to be that this was not an item which ought to be inserted in the schedule of the Bill, on the showing of the Government themselves. He did not mean to say that there was any intention to deceive, but, at the same time, there was an item for £50,000, with a foot-note to the effect that this sum did not represent the total estimate of cost. But one would scarcely conclude from this that the total expenditure was to be at least £4,500,000. It was not treating the House or the country quite fairly to put down an item of £50,000 which did not represent the total cost, and then allow the discovery to be made that the real amount was to be £4,500,000. And even that was only a rough and apparently unfinished idea of what the expenditure would be. How much money would be expended this year? This was evidently the thin end of the wedge, and it was desirable that the House should know the bulk of the other end of the wedge. The best method would be to strike out the item of £50,000 altogether, and only insert the figures when the Admiralty had finally ascertained what the ultimate expenditure was to be.

*MR. RITCHIE said that this was a course to which he could not give his assent. The right hon. Gentleman knew perfectly well that there was a great deal of work to be done before tenders could be accepted for the work. He had gone very carefully into the proposed expenditure, and had inquired as to the necessity for it; and on examination he was convinced that if Chatham Dockyard was to be utilised it was essential that this improvement should be made. But before they could begin to ask for tenders there must be a very considerable amount of expenditure incurred for necessary preliminary work, and it was necessary that the sum in the Bill should be taken this year if the work was to be proceeded with later. An endeavour must be made to ascertain exactly how the tenders were to be made out before the work could be contracted for. The work would not be gone on with until the House had enjoyed the opportunity of considering the question again, with a proper estimate contained in another Bill which would be presented to the House. This sum of £50,000 would be largely spent in the preliminary works which were essential to enable the Admiralty to receive proper tenders for the work to be done.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN suggested that it would be better in that case to embody an item of money for the preparation of plans and to ascertain the requirements of the Chatham Dockyard. Then the Government would know what it really wanted, and it could come again for the whole sum required. The objection to the present proposal was that under cover of this small sum the House and the country were being asked to commit themselves to an unknown amount of expenditure.

SIR FORTESCUE FLANNERY (Yorkshire, Shipley) said he could not agree with the last words of the Leader of the Opposition. It seemed to him that this small amount placed upon the Estimates was based upon a well-known custom which enabled the House to consider whether the works at Chatham dockyard should or should not be initiated. Anyone could understand that this dockyard, protected by nature, and remote from the open sea, could be kept free from attacks from the vessels of an enemy by torpedoes and other devices. Having decided that proper provision should be made for its protection and enlargement, it was, however, difficult to say beforehand what works would be required, as they could not be completed for five years. His hon. friend the Member for Leicester must know that changes were being made in the size, and particularly in the beam and draft of water, of ships of war, and therefore it was impossible to say what expenditure would ultimately be required. This item of £50,000 was only a "token" sum, and indicated that a very much larger expenditure would ultimately be required.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON said that the few words spoken by the Chancellor of the Exchequer had thrown a good deal of light on this question. The right hon. Gentleman was no doubt right when he said that a certain amount of preliminary expenditure was necessary. But the expenditure of this sum of £50,000 was to be spread over a period of two years for the preliminary purpose mentioned by the Chancellor of the Exchequer. This sum would not be required for the next six months, and it would not have appeared in this Bill at all but for the system under which a Naval Works Bill was introduced every two years. This was the largest sum the House had ever been asked to vote for any Naval Works, larger than that for Keyham, or even for Gibraltar. He suggested that the item should be withdrawn from this Bill, and that a special Naval Works Bill should be brought forward next year dealing with Chatham Dockyard, and also with Rosyth. He did not see why all that need be done during the next five or six months in reference to this scheme, could not be done by the Admiralty out of the resources at their disposal.

*MR. PRETYMAN said that hon. Gentlemen opposite had pressed for some finality in naval works, and to make full provision for it. The Government had yielded to that pressure, and had given to the Committee the information as to what the Admiralty proposed to do, but they were immediately attacked for that by hon. Gentlemen opposite. These two accusations could not run together. In order to meet the financial requirements of the House the Government had to see that before any work was undertaken the House approved it, knowing the whole cost That was a financial principle laid down by the present Secretary of State for India and he entirely agreed with it. But before arriving at a final estimate it was necessary to spend money. It was impossible to arrive at the final sum required before any expenditure was incurred. He proposed to insert a total sum in the Bill on the clear understanding that it was not the final estimate after expenditure had been incurred, but the nearest figure they could give before expenditure, and as a compromise between the financial requirements and the works requirements. It was agreed that this work was necessary, and he thought they might fairly ask the Committee to sanction it.

SIR JAMES JOICEY said the Admiralty did not go to work quite in a business way. What the Civil Lord said could not be done was done every day. He objected to the manner in which the proposal was put before the Committee. If a railway company were going to make an expenditure of over £4,000,000, the first thing they would do would be to instruct their engineer to prepare plans showing the work to be carried out. They would next make a complete estimate of the cost, and then call for tenders for the work. It was perfectly absurd for the Admiralty to say that before taking tenders £50,000 must be spent. He complained that the Admiralty proceeded by rule of thumb, and that they had no actual plan in their mind of what they were going to do. The Opposition were not anxious to prevent any necessary work on the dockyard, but they did protest against an expenditure of £50,000 without knowing anything of the work to be done. The Government had got into a habit of late years, owing to their large majority, of practically treating the House of Commons with contempt. [MINISTERIAL cries of "No."] At any rate, they were asked to place such implicit confidence in the Government as to accept all statements from the Government Benches as being correct. He protested against that view. As an ordinary member of the rank and file he considered that he was sent to the House of Commons to look closely into these questions. Personally he was not content with the system adopted by the Government of asking the House for a blank cheque, and he hoped hon. Members on the Opposition side of the House would protest and vote against the Government putting in these sums without making a sufficiently definite explanation. The Government had done things which had never before been done by any other Government since he had been in the House. He was glad this question had been raised.

MR. KEARLEY (Devonport) complained of the manner in which the proposal was brought before the Committee. He pointed out that when the

Keyham extension works were proposed some years ago Lord Shuttleworth, who was then Secretary to the Admiralty, went down to the House and propounded his scheme. A request was then made for plans, which were duly placed on view. That course was not being followed in this instance, and until the Admiralty brought on the question of £50,000, they had no idea that £4,500,000 was to be spent at Chatham. He could not see why they should go on with this matter until the House had had an opportunity of knowing what works were to be carried out.

*MR. PRETYMAN said he had already stated them fully.

MR. KEARLEY said he had listened carefully but had failed to hear his hon. friend state with definiteness what works were to be carried out.

*MR. PRETYMAN said he stated them with all definiteness.

MR. KEARLEY said there was no finality about this proposal. The Admiralty had no plan and the whole thing was in the air. He wished to know if the Civil Lord would pledge himself to put the plans in the tea-room.

*MR. PRETYMAN promised that the general plans, at any rate, should be placed in the tea-room of the House.

MR. KEARLEY was glad to have that promise, because at the present time there was not the faintest idea as to what was going to happen at Chatham.

MR. DALZIEL said this was the most extraordinary course of procedure ever put forward by a responsible Government, for they were actually asked to borrow this money for thirty years for preliminary expenses. This expenditure ought to be placed upon the Estimates in the ordinary way. What would be the position if, after sanctioning this £50,000, the House decided that the expenditure of this £4,500,000 was unnecessary? The Civil Lord had promised that general plans would be placed in the tea-room. Would the hon. Gentleman agree to postpone this item until hon. Members had had an opportunity of seeing the plans? He would like to know how this £4,500,000 had been arrived at. They had no information about it and no plan. He supposed this £4,500,000 was not mentioned to the Chancellor of the Exchequer when the £50,000 was put down? As the right hon. Gentleman did not contradict that statement he assumed that the Chancellor of the Exchequer did not know that a sum equal to £4,500,000 would be required. The position was that the Civil Lord of the Admiralty had put forward an Estimate of £4,500,000 before it had been sanctioned by the Treasury. That was reversing the old order of things. The Admiralty made a proposal and the Committee sanctioned it, and afterwards the Civil Lord would be able to present a pistol at the head of the Chancellor of the Exchequer and say, "I have got you cornered now because the House has already sanctioned it." The proper course was for the Admiralty to begin by obtaining the *imprimatur* of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and then inform the House that the Treasury had sanctioned it. If the Chancellor of the Exchequer had said that he had gone carefully into these amounts and seen the plans, and that he was convinced of the necessity for this expenditure, that would have gone a long way to shorten this debate. The Committee was asked to sanction a preliminary expenditure when it was really committing itself to an expenditure of £4,500,000. In these circumstances there was no alternative but to divide against this proposal as a protest.

MR. BROADHURST appealed to the Admiralty to postpone the matter until next year. He asserted that a sum so large as this would be justified in having a special Bill to itself. The Secretary to the Admiralty had given a certain number of items of the work to be executed at a cost of £4,500,000. He had said to engineers and contractors—"For these works we are prepared to give £4,500,000." That was not a business way of proceeding, and instead they ought to obtain plans and specifications, and then invite tenders in order to see how much the cost would be, taking their own engineer's estimate as a basis for the tender. The hon. Gentleman no doubt knew what specifications were. [Cries of "Oh, oh" and "Hear, hear."] It was not everybody who knew what they were. The Chancellor of the Exchequer was a business man, and in submitting those considerations to the right hon. Gentleman he felt that it was only reasonable and respectful, and in the interests of the Government, the House, and the taxpayers that the proposal should be withdrawn for one year until proper plans had been prepared and submitted, and proper estimates taken, instead of a full disclosure being made to the contractors of the full price that would be given for the completion of certain works. He appealed to the Chancellor of the Exchequer to advise his colleagues to take that reasonable course.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 136; Noes, 60. (Division List No. 191.)

AYES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Atkinson, Right Hon. John
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (*Manch'r*
Balfour, Captain C. B. (*Hornsey*)
Balfour, Rt Hn. Gerald W (*Leeds*
Balfour, Kenneth R. (*Christch.*
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bignold, Arthur
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Bull, William James
Butcher, John George
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, R. F. (*N. Lancs.*)
Cavendish, V. C. W. (*Derbyshire*
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J A (*Worc*
Chapman, Edward
Clare, Octavius Leigh
Cochrane, Hn. Thos. H. A. E.
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Chas. Ready
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Corbett, T. L. (*Down, North*)
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Cross, H. Shepherd (*Bolton*)
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dorington, Rt. Hon. Sir J. E.
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers
Duke, Henry Edward
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Faber, George Denison (*York*)
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Ed.
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J (*Manc'r*
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Flower, Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Philip S. (*Warwick, S. W.*
Godson, Sir Augustus Frederick
Gore, Hn. G R C. Ormsby-(*Salop*
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir J. Eldon
Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Gray, Ernest (*West Ham*)
Hamilton, Rt. Hn. Ld G. (*Mid'x*)
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
Hoult, Joseph
Howard, Jno (*Kent, Faver hm.*
Jeffreys, Rt. Hon. Arthur Fred.
Jessel, Capt. Herbert Merton
Johnstone, Heywood
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W. (*Salop*
Keswick, William
King, Sir Henry Seymour
Knowles, Lees
Law, Andrew Bonar (*Glasgow*)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (*Liverpool*)
Lawson, John Grant (*Yorks. N R*
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N. S.
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Rt. Hon. Walter (*Bristol, S*
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Francis William
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas, Col. Francis (*Lowstoft*)
Lyttelton, Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
M'Arthur, Charles (*Liverpool*)
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Morrell, George Herbert
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Murray, Rt Hn A. Graham (*Bute*
Murray, Charles J. (*Coventry*)
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
Parker, Sir Gilbert
Parkes, Ebenezer
Pease, H. Pike (*Darlington*)
Peel, Hn. Wm. R. Wellesley
Percy, Earl
Pierpoint, Robert
Pilkington, Colonel Richard
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Walter R.
Pretyman, Ernest George
Purvis, Robert
Reid, James (*Greenock*)
Renshaw, Sir Charles Bine
Ritchie, Rt Hn. Chas. Thomson
Robertson, H. (*Hackney*)
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford-
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Sinclair, Louis (*Romford*)
Smith, Abel H. (*Hertford, E.*)
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (*Strand*
Stanley, Lord (*Lancs.*)
Stock, James Henry
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Talbot, Lord E. (*Chichester*)
Talbot, Rt Hn. J. G. (*Oxf'd Univ.*
Taylor, Austin (*East Toxteth*)
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Valentia, Viscount
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt. Hn. Sir Wm. H.
Webb, Colonel William George
Whiteley, H. (*Ashton-und-Lyne*
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Wilson, A. Stanley (*York, E. R.*
Wilson, John (*Glasgow*)
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Ashton, Thomas Gair
Atherley-Jones, L.
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Brigg, John
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Burns, John
Caldwell, James
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Causton, Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Cremer, William Randal
Crooks, William

Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, M. Vaughan (*Cardign*
Dewar, John A. (*Inverness-sh.*)
Evans, Sir F. H. (*Maidstone*)
Foster, Sir Walter (*Derby Co.*
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert J.
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale
Helme, Norval Watson
Holland, Sir William Henry
Horniman, Frederick John
Joicey, Sir James
Jones, Wm. (*Carnarvonshire*)
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kilbride, Denis
Lambert, George
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (*Cornwall*)
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Levy, Maurice
Lloyd-George, David
Lough, Thomas
M'Arthur, William (*Cornwall*)
M'Kenna, Reginald
Partington, Oswald
Perks, Robert William
Roberts, John Bryn (*Eifion*)
Roberts, John H. (*Denbighs*)
Robertson, Edmund (*Dundee*
Runciman, Walter
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Thomas (*Hawick, B.*)
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (*Forfarshire*)
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Taylor, Theo. C. (*Radcliffe*
Thomas, David A. (*Merthyr*)
Thomas, F. Freeman- (*Hastings*
Thomson, F. W. (*York, W. R.*)
Tomkinson, James
Toulmin, George
Ure, Alexander
Wason, John Cathcart (*Orkney*)
Weir, James Galloway
White, Luke (*York, E. R.*)
Whiteley, George (*York, W.R.*
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wilson, Henry J. (*York, W.R.*)
Yoxall, James Henry

Tellers for the Noes—
Mr. Broadhurst and Mr. Whitley.

Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON, on a point of order, asked how, in view of the fact that the result of the division was to retain the whole of line 36 in the schedule, the Government proposed on the Report stage to move in any figures by way of Amendment.

*The CHAIRMAN: That is not a point of order.

Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON: But how is the proposed Amendment of the Government to be inserted?

*The CHAIRMAN: It cannot be, as the House has insisted on retaining the whole line and has thereby rejected the Amendment.

Mr. THOMAS SHAW (Hawick Burghs) moved to reduce the proposed expenditure of £200,000 on the new naval establishment at Rosyth to £120,000. They were told that that sum did not represent the total estimated cost. On the Second Reading he asked the Government what was their contemplated expenditure on Rosyth, and he would again repeat that Question on the present occasion. Surely when they bought the land the Government had some idea of the cost of the works they contemplated. Had the Chancellor of the Exchequer himself inquired into the expenditure on the naval base, and if so what had been the result of his inquiry? As business men the Government could not have come forward with a scheme of which they had not counted the cost. The House, at any rate, was entirely in the dark as to what it was intended to do. Now £122,000 was paid for the land, and for that money they got 1,460 acres. What did the price work out at? On the Second Reading he cited the price of land to be acquired under the Irish Land Bill, and he showed that the price paid at Rosyth was stupendously in excess of any price contemplated to be paid in Ireland. Now, he would give another illustration showing how the State had been bled. The Government bought 1,100 acres on Salisbury Plain for £15,750, or £15 per acre, roughly speaking; but at Rosyth they bought 1,464 acres for £122,000. That, he supposed, was the price of secrecy.

Sir FREDERICK BANBURY (Camberwell, Peckham): Does the hon. Gentleman think the value of land is the same at all places?

Mr. THOMAS SHAW: No. His point was that the Secretary for War complained that in the Salisbury Plain case the State was forced to pay a higher price because secrecy had not been preserved. But in the Rosyth case they had secrecy, and with what result? Why, they had paid £84 per acre! It was a most strange and inequitable transaction. Let them look at it in the light of the number of years purchase. If land were highly rented it would, on the same ratio of years purchase, fetch a higher figure than land low rented. The rental value of the land at Rosyth was 22s. per acre, so that, as the result of a secret transaction, it had been sold at the rate of seventy-five years' purchase. That might be all right, but it needed a lot of explaining. An enormous price had been paid to the owner of the land without it being known that the Admiralty were in the market, for they were told that the negotiations were carried on through a private individual. The great defect in this matter was that the Government had deliberately abandoned the procedure put in their hands under the Military Works Bill, a procedure which gave them power to buy the land by arbitration. Under the Lands Clauses Act they had to convert an unwilling seller into a willing seller, and then to add 10 per cent. to the price. It was said that value was given for amenity to the grounds of Hopetoun House, which was separated from this land by a large and deep arm of the sea. The idea of giving amenity value in respect of land which did not adjoin the estate seemed to be a thing as to which Parliament needed a full explanation. They had been told that an esteemed friend of his, Mr. Binnie, was consulted as to the value of the land. But what was the question put to him? Was he asked as to its value on the footing that the land was to be compulsorily taken? Of course, if so, he dealt with it on the basis of an unwilling seller, and he would have to add 10 per cent. But if he were asked the question on the footing that the man would not sell except at a price so high as to induce him to be willing to sell, the whole theory of the Lands Clauses arbitration disappeared entirely. This transaction deserved the closest scrutiny. He took exception to the extraordinary statement that in Scotland it was the practice to add 50 per cent. in arbitrations to the agricultural value of the land for compulsory sale. But if the owner had been given twenty-five years' purchase instead of seventy-five, with 50 per cent. added for compulsory sale, the price paid would have been £60,000 only instead of £122,000, and however much ingenuity might be displayed in explaining that transaction, he ventured to say it was very strange indeed.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 3, line 15, column 5, to leave out '£200,000 and insert '£130,000.'"—(*Mr. Thomas Shaw.*)

Question proposed, "That £200,000 stand part of the schedule."

Mr. Thomas Shaw.

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. A. GRAHAM MURRAY, Buteshire) said that he never heard an attack made on a transaction with less ground than that which had been made by one who ought to know better. In spite of all the follies that were credited to the Government by the Opposition, he did not suppose that hon. Members opposite thought the Admiralty saw any fun in throwing money to the bottom of the sea. Therefore, the accusation, if it meant anything, resolved itself into this—that the Admiralty had knowingly made a present of public money to a nobleman who happened to be a political friend of theirs. He did not suppose that the height of ingenuity could suggest that the site was chosen as a naval base because it belonged to Lord Linlithgow; it was chosen because the situation was a good one on the Firth of Forth, and he was much mistaken as to Scotch feeling in particular and national feeling in general, if anyone could be found to say that the selection was a bad one. Once Rosyth was selected, the person who happened to be the owner, so far as the Admiralty was concerned, was a matter of chance. It was often said that the Government ought to act as business men. What ought they to have done as business men in this case? The Admiralty had their own professional valuers, but they recognised that Scotch land would need to be valued by Scotch valuers. Months ago he was asked by the Admiralty to help them as to the selection of the proper men. He found that Mr. Davidson of Saltoun and Lord Rosebery's factor, Mr. Glendinning, who had been privately consulted by Lord Linlithgow as to the value of the property, were not available. But he selected a gentleman with an absolutely unique experience of Scottish land, Mr. Binnie, and associated with him was Mr. Campbell Murray, the factor of the hon. Baronet who represented one of the divisions of Glasgow. These gentlemen were told to give the Admiralty their view of the proper valuation of the land. The hon. and learned Member asked whether the owner was a willing seller or not. He was not a willing seller in the sense that his land was not in the market for sale. But if a man was not in the market with his property, and that property was required by a railway company or a Government Department with compulsory powers, was it to be believed that the man would sell his land by private treaty for less than he could get in arbitration? It was childish to suggest that the allowance for compulsory acquisition should be excluded, when in order to get it all the owner had to do was to go to arbitration. Then the hon. and learned Member, who ought to know better, said that the ordinary practice in Scottish arbitration with respect to agricultural land was not to add 50 per cent. for compulsory acquisition. Had he forgotten the arbitration on the Earl of Moray's estate when the railway over the Forth Bridge was projected? Ever since then it had been held as settled that the allowance for compulsion was 50 per cent. for agricultural land. On the other hand, the compulsory allowance on feuing value was 10 per cent. But, after all, this had nothing to do with the question. It was no use saying that land in another part of the kingdom had been obtained at £15 an acre. What relation had an acre of land on Salisbury Plain to an acre of land in the City of London, and what relation had either to an acre of land at Rosyth? The circumstances and conditions of each particular case must be known before it could be determined whether or not a fair bargain had been made. The House of Commons could not constitute itself a jury of valuers without evidence and without knowledge of the conditions. Two most experienced valuers had reported to the Admiralty that their valuation was within £9,000 of what could be arranged by settlement, and as it was £60,000 below what was originally claimed, they advised the Admiralty to pay the extra £9,000, and so get rid of the heavy arbitration expenses, and the danger of a much higher award. One of the last Government arbitrations in Scotland was at Broughty Ferry, when the War Office witnesses valued the land at £3,500, and when the oversman—who was the hon. and learned Member for the Border Burghs himself—awarded £9,000. The feuing value of land could not be calculated in years' purchase of the arable rent. Each case must be judged on its own merits, and unless the House was prepared to affirm the absurd proposition that it was wrong for the Government to make a private settlement, it was foolish and idle to attempt to set aside as unjust and inequitable a settlement advised by two such eminent and skilful valuers as those who had been consulted by the Admiralty in this case.

SIR H. CAMPBELL BANNERMAN: The right hon. Gentleman has made a most ingenious plea in defence of this extraordinary transaction, but I think that most people would be disposed to say "the thing exists." The right hon. Gentleman cannot get over the seventy-five years purchase. He throws scorn on the argument of my hon. and learned friend, and says, "What is the use of talking of Salisbury Plain and making comparisons with other parts of the country?" But I do not think the number of years purchase differs very much. The rental may differ, but the mode of calculation does not differ very materially. Let me give a case as an instance. A property was sold not many months ago in the neighbourhood of Rosyth. I know a good deal about Rosyth. Rosyth is not in my constituency, but it is close to two ports of my constituency which I visit every year in the exercise of the useful function of giving account to my constituents of what I have been doing, and I know perfectly well the character of the land, its position, and its advantages and disadvantages, so far as they appear on the surface, although I have never been underground. But here is a property of the same kind of land in the same county, not many miles off, which was sold the other day for £38,000. There were 2,200 acres, the agricultural rent was £1,100, the mineral rent was £800; so that the total rent was £1,900. That property was sold for £38,000, including minerals, which are not included in this purchase. That is the ordinary value of land of this kind. The right hon. Gentleman referred to the railway that runs through Lord Moray's property a little bit farther along the coast in the same part of the world, where there was a great amenity, as we say in Scotland. It was a beautiful little district. The railway at Aberdour was spoiling the scenery and the capabilities of the country. There is nothing of the kind at Rosyth, and it is perfect nonsense to talk of anything in the nature of an eyesore or as destroying property when you have I do not know how many miles of sea between it and Lord Hopetoun's house. This was a separate little property, entirely apart from the Hopetoun property, with no picturesque value whatever. Although we are perfectly willing that Lord Linlithgow should get full value for his property—no one would have anything but good feeling towards Lord Linlithgow—it is absurd to reckon up all these advantages which do not exist in order to put up the price for this property. Then we are told that there is feuing value. There is no feuing value. Almost anywhere you can find a landed proprietor who can feu a piece of his land in order to meet the fancy of an individual, and get a considerable feu duty. But it would never do for him to multiply that by the number of acres he has in his property, and say that that was the feuing value. A feu estate is a totally different thing from an estate on which there is an accidental feu. I have never heard a lamer case made out, either on the ground of amenities in Scotland or on the ground of feu value, especially when you come to think of the agricultural value of land in the market in the very locality in which Rosyth is situated. Put out of your mind Salisbury Plain. I am not sure that property always goes very cheaply even on Salisbury Plain. Put the City of London aside. Take any case of property in the same district, and how does this bargain stand? The Lord Advocate can hardly look us in the face and pretend that this is a reasonable bargain. The fact which he cannot get over is the fact of seventy-five years' purchase. Let him produce any other instance where the Government have been acquiring property in Scotland on a scale like this, and at anything like the price. What did they pay for the Barry property? I guarantee it was nothing like this. There is not a word to be said for the whole transaction. It is so flagrant and enormous that it passes the possibilities of defence, and although we can think nothing wrong of Lord Linlithgow—a man for whom we have the greatest respect, and whom we are very glad to see getting the full value of the land that belongs to him—yet we cannot but denounce the reckless or, at any rate, mistaken bargain which the Government have made in this important matter.

Sir FORTESCUE FLANNERY said the Leader of the Opposition had not alluded to the fact, stated by the Lord Advocate, that the valuers retained by the Admiralty had valued this property at within £9,000 of the price paid. Until some proof was forthcoming that the professional valuers, in whose honour and ability he had every confidence, were wrong, he should believe that this transaction had been carried through in a perfectly proper manner, and that a reasonable bargain had been made in the interest of the nation. The figures in the case cited by the right hon. Gentleman appeared somewhat extraordinary. The estate referred to was sold, according to the right hon. Gentleman, for £38,000, and the rental was £1,100 for agricultural value, and £800 for minerals. That worked out at 5 per cent. per annum. Surely the right hon. Gentleman had made a mistake in his figures. As to the amenity, in this instance the State had insisted on purchasing a piece of land which was greatly valued by the former owner. This land was in full view of an historic mansion. Upon it was to be erected factories, chimneys belching forth smoke, and all the other paraphernalia of a dockyard, which would seriously destroy the amenities from the sentimental and artistic point of view of this land. The nobleman enjoying these amenities was compelled against his will to sell his property, and he sold it as an honourable man should. He for one refused to believe that there was anything in the way of want of judgment on the part of the Admiralty in this transaction, and he hoped it would prove entirely satisfactory.

Mr. EDMUND ROBERTSON said the question raised two aspects—the business aspect, and the naval aspect. The whole of the present debate had turned on the business aspect, and he rose mainly for the purpose of asking the Civil Lord for some information on the naval aspect. With reference to his hon. friend's contention the Lord Advocate in his reply appeared to introduce quite unnecessary passion into his arguments. For instance, he said that his hon. friend the Member for the Border Burghs had made a charge which, if it meant anything at all, meant that the Admiralty had knowingly made a present of public money to a political supporter. His hon. friend said nothing of the kind.

*MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY said that he did not say it was suggested; but that that was what the charge came to.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON said he did not certainly suggest anything of the kind, nor did his hon. friend. The charge had a meaning quite apart from that suggestion altogether; and his hon. friend repudiated any such suggestion. His hon. friend dealt with the matter as one of public business, and the introduction of political friendship by the Lord Advocate was not justified by anything that had been said.

*MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY said in the first debate on the subject the expression "a political friend" was used, and "a scandalous job" was referred to, and the words were printed on newspaper placards.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON said the phrases "a monstrous job" and "a political supporter" were not used from that bench. It was admitted on both sides that the price paid amounted to seventy-five and a half years purchase; that was a matter of arithmetic.

*MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY said it really was not, because seventy-five and a half years purchase was based on the agricultural rental, and had no regard to the prospective feuing or building value. It seemed to him like describing avoirdupois by troy weight.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON said the right hon. Gentleman would forgive him for reminding him that in his reply he did not say a word about feuing value. His hon. friend said that the land had no feuing value other than that which it might acquire by the Admiralty coming into the district. It was an extraordinary thing that two competent valuers should have arrived at a value which, to the common sense of that House, seemed exceedingly high. The explanation of the Lord Advocate was, that in Scotland in cases of compulsory purchase arbitrators habitually added 50 per cent. to the normal value.

*MR. A. GRAHAM MURRAY said what he had stated was that 50 per cent. had been added to agricultural value, and 10 per cent. to feuing value.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON said he could not pretend to dispute that. He would accept it. He did not care a button about railway companies or corporations; but it was different when the greatest Department of the State wanted land for the greatest of all national purposes that it should be compelled to pay 50 per cent. more than its value as agricultural land. It was not a job but a scandal that the country could not resume possession of its own land for the purpose of national defence without having to pay such an enormous price. The result would be that something would have to be done to give the State the right to take land for public purposes. He wished to ask the noble Lord if he had any explanation to offer as to the naval aspect of this question. That was a great deal more important than the question they had been discussing, important though that was. He wished to ask if the noble Lord would follow the precedent he set in the case of Chatham, and give the Committee a rough estimate of the total cost of the proposed establishment at Rosyth. The Civil Lord cleared away the darkness with regard to Chatham; he hoped he would now clear away the darkness about Rosyth. He wished to know what was to be the nature of the establishment to be set up, what would be the estimated total cost, and whether the Civil Lord intended on the Report stage to put the figures in.

MR. JOHN DEWAR (Inverness) said that the most telling part of the Lord Advocate's defence was that the Committee should not form themselves into a valuation Committee, as many hon. Members had never seen the place and knew nothing of it. That, however, did not prevent the Committee from expressing an opinion as to the value the State had received for the money which had been paid. He thought the Committee were of opinion that too much was given for this piece of land. The Lord Advocate could not get over the fact that seventy-five years purchase had been paid for it. According to his hon. friend the Member for the Border Burghs twenty-five years purchase would have been a considerable price for agricultural land, and even with fifty per cent. added on the total would only amount to £60,000 or half the price paid. The Lord Advocate got over the price by saying that there was a feuing value in the land, but that was directly contradicted by hon. Members who knew the land and all the circumstances. He asked the Lord Advocate whether any land at Rosyth had ever been feued, whether any inquiries for land there had ever been made, and whether any feuing plan had been prepared. He was prepared to admit that the Lord Advocate's witnesses were as good as could have been got; but the Lord Advocate knew very well that in arbitration cases witnesses who would give unfavourable evidence need not necessarily be called. He was prepared to say that if the Lord Advocate had this case to prepare he would produce witnesses who would put the value very much nearer the figure that they contended it ought to be than it was. He would support the Amendment of his hon friend. If the Government had taken compulsory powers in this matter, and had prepared a case for arbitration, they would have got the land very much cheaper. He did not say it was a job, but it was the result of mismanagement.

*SIR WILLIAM TOMLINSON (Preston) said the question appeared to him to be simply this—whether the Government would have done better by acquiring the land compulsorily or by negotiation. He could give instances which occurred in England to show that under the Land Claims Act the Agricultural value of the land would not be the only element which would be taken into account. When land was compulsorily acquired, any tribunal would add to its agricultural value a reasonable amount in view of its capability for the purpose for which it was acquired. In this instance the proximity of he land to the estuary would have been taken into account. It appeared to him that if the Government had proceeded through compulsion they would not have secured the land at an easier price.

*MR. PRETYMAN said that with reference to the question of the hon. Member for Dundee as to the estimated cost of the work at Rosyth, it was perfectly evident that at that stage of the project it would be absolutely impossible for the Admiralty, however willing they might be, to give any such estimate. He went very fully into the question on the previous occasion, and had now nothing to add. With reference to the insertion of the figures, that had already been shown to be impossible. He had expressed his willingness to endeavour to secure the insertion of the figures.

*THE CHAIRMAN: I do not think it desirable to go back on these matters. The hon. Gentleman must confine himself to the question now before the Committee.

*MR. PRETYMAN said he had nothing further to add.

MR. THOMAS SHAW said that the House of Commons ought to know from the Government what was in their own minds with regard to the expenditure on Rosyth. The Government must have some idea, and the House of Commons should be put in possession of it. He did not think that the Lord Advocate had met the case which he had put before the Committee. His case was totally irrespective of the nobleman concerned, who had nothing whatever to do with it. That nobleman was perfectly right in demanding a large price from the Government; the Government had the power to compel him to sell, but they abandoned it. He could not understand how the Government had been led into such a transaction; and he thought that the defence offered by the Lord Advocate was not at all satisfactory.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 144; Noes, 55. (Division List No. 192.)

AYES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (*Manch'r*
Balfour, Capt. C. B. (*Hornsey*
Balfour, Rt. Hn. G. W. (*Leeds*
Balfour, Kenneth R. (*Christch.*)
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bignold, Arthur
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith-
Bousfield, William Robert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Butcher, John George
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H
Cavendish, R. F. (*N. Lancs.*)
Cavendish, V. C. W. (*Derbyshire*
Cecil, Evelyn (*Aston Manor*)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (*Greenwich*)
Chamberlain, Rt Hn. J. A. (*Worc*

Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Collings, Right Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Charles Ready
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Corbett, T. L. (*Down, North*)
Cross, Herb. Shepherd (*Bolton*
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley-
Davies, M. Vaughan-(*Cardigan*
Dickson, Charles Scott
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Dorington, Rt. Hon. Sir J. E.
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Duke, Henry Edward
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Faber, George Denison (*York*)
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Ed.
Fergusson, Rt. Hn Sir J. (*Manc'r*
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Philip S. (*Warwick. S. W*
Fyler, John Arthur
Gibbs, Hn. A. G. H. (*City of Lond*
Godson, Sir Augustus Frederick
Gore, Hn. G R. C. Ormsby-(*Salop*
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir J. Eldon
Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Gray, Ernest (*West Ham*)
Hamilton, Rt Hn Lord G. (*Mid'x*
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Henderson, Sir Alexander
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
Hoult, Joseph
Howard, Jno. (*Kent, Faversham*
Jeffreys, Rt. Hon. Arthur Fred.
Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
Kemp, Lieut.-Colonel George
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W. (*Salop*
Keswick, William
King, Sir Henry Seymour
Knowles, Lees
Law, Andrew Bonar (*Glasgow*)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (*Liverpool*
Lawson, J. Grant (*Yorks., N.R.*)
Lees, Sir Elliott (*Birkenhead*)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N. S.
Llewellyn, Evan Henry
Lockwood, Lieut-Col. A. R.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (*Bristol, S*
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Francis William
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas, Col. Francis (*Lowestoft*
Lyttelton, Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
M'Arthur, Charles (*Liverpool*
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Morgan, David J (*Walthamstow*
Morrell, George Herbert
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Murray, Rt. Hn A. Graham (*Bute*
Murray, Charles J. (*Coventry*)
Parkes, Ebenezer
Pease, Herbt. Pike (*Darlington*
Peel, Hn. Wm. R. Wellesley
Percy, Earl
Pierpoint, Robert
Pilkington, Col. Richard
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Pretyman, Ernest George
Purvis, Robert
Reid, James (*Greenock*)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. Chas. Thomson
Robertson, Herbert (*Hackney*
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford-
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Scott, Sir S. (*Marylebone, W.*)
Seely, Charles Hilton (*Lincoln*
Seely, Maj. J. E. B. (*Isle of Wight*
Sinclair, Louis (*Romford*)
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, Abel H. (*Hertford, E.*)
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (*Strand*)
Stanley, Lord (*Lancs.*)
Stock, James Henry
Talbot, Lord E. (*Chichester*)
Talbot, Rt. Hn. J. G. (*Oxf'd Univ*
Taylor, Austin (*East Toxteth*)
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Valentia, Viscount
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt. Hn Sir William H.
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Webb, Colonel William George
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wilson, A. Stanley (*York, E.R.*
Wilson, John (*Falkirk*)
Wortley, Rt. Hn. C. B. Stuart-
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood, and Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Asher, Alexander
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Brigg, John
Broadhurst, Henry
Bryce, Right Hon. James
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burns, John
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Causton, Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Cremer, William Randal
Dalziel, James Henry
Evans, Sir F. H. (*Maidstone*)
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (*Leith*)
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert J.
Griffith, Ellis J.
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Hayne, Rt. Hon Charles Seale-
Helme, Norval Watson
Horniman, Frederick John
Joicey, Sir James
Jones, William (*Carnarvonsh.*)
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kilbride, Denis
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (*Cornwall*
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Levy, Maurice
Lough, Thomas
M'Arthur, William (*Cornwall*)
Partington, Oswald
Roberts, John Bryn (*Eifion*)
Roberts, John H. (*Denbighs.*)
Robertson, Edmund (*Dundee*)
Rose, Charles Day
Runciman, Walter
Samuel, S. M. (*Whitechapel*)
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Thomas (*Hawick, B.*)
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (*Forfarshire*)
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Spencer, Rt. Hn C. R. (*Northants*
Taylor, Theodore C. (*Radcliffe*)
Thomas, David Alfred (*Merthyr*
Thomas, F. Freeman (*Hastings*)
Thomson, F. W. (*York, W. R.*)
Tomkinson, James
Toulmin, George
Warner, Thos. Courtenay T.
White, Luke (*York, E. R.*)
Whitley, J. H. (*Halifax*)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Caldwell and Mr. Dewar.

MR. BUCHANAN moved to leave out line 18 of the schedule. He said the question of gunnery schools to which this item referred illustrated in another way the uncertain character of the schedules of these Acts. In the 1897 and 1899 Acts a total estimated cost of £227,000 was put down for Sheerness naval barracks; the works were never done, and the proposal was abandoned. Now the item appeared under the general head of gunnery schools on the Medway and elsewhere. He thought they were justified in asking the Admiralty for a definite understanding that no new item or sub-item should be added to this in future Acts.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 3, to leave out line 18."—(*Mr. Buchanan.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the schedule."

*Mr. PRETYMAN said the item related to Sheerness, and it was not the case that the proposed works had been abandoned. The works were to be removed to another site. Part of the money was for a gunnery school at Devonport. Nothing would be added to the item without the consent of the House.

Question put, and agreed to.

*Sir JOHN COLOMB moved to amend the schedule by substituting £670,400 for the sum of £791,400, the estimated total cost of the Portsmouth naval barracks. He said his belief was that the Admiralty were spending a great deal too much on bricks and mortar for naval barracks. An increase in the Navy did not mean a need for more barrack accommodation in the same way as an increase in the Army. This was because a great many of the men in the Navy were married and did not live in barracks at all. The only explanation the Committee had received was that the barracks were necessary in connection with the question of mobilisation. He would remind the Committee that mobilisation was the work of a week. It was a false principle to build permanent barracks to provide for the necessity of a week. He moved.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 3, line 19, to leave out '£791,400,' and insert '£670,400.'"—(*Sir John Colomb.*)

Question proposed, "That £791,400 stand part of the schedule."

*Mr. PRETYMAN said the increased sum was required to provide additional hammock accommodation for the men during mobilisation. It was also required for the provision of swimming-baths, gymnasia, sick-quarters, and other accommodation.

Mr. COURTENAY WARNER (Staffordshire, Lichfield) said he understood that a great part of the expenditure of this amount was not necessary for the permanent establishment, but only for purposes of mobilisation. Was that so?

*Mr. PRETYMAN: This only refers to the extra hammocks.

Mr. WHITLEY said these Naval Works Bills were encouraging the Admiralty to spend money on bricks and mortar which ought to be spent on good ships and providing better conditions for the men on board. He thought there ought to have been on the face of the schedule a detailed statement showing the cause for the expenditure proposed to be incurred. It was a kind of finance the House would have to put a stop to if it was to have control over the spending of the money.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

And, it being Midnight, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Committee report Progress; to sit again to-morrow.

POOR LAW (DISSOLUTION OF SCHOOL DISTRICTS AND ADJUSTMENTS) BILL.

Read a second time, and committed for this day.

JURY ACTS (IRELAND) AMENDMENT BILL.

Order for Second Reading read, and discharged.

Bill withdrawn.

PUBLIC BUILDINGS EXPENSES (CONSOLIDATED FUND).

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House will, this day, resolve itself into a Committee to consider of making further provision for defraying the expenses of the purchase of Land and Buildings and the construction of Buildings and Works in connection with certain Public Departments, and of authorising the payment out of the Consolidated Fund and out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of such sums as may be necessary for those purposes (King's Recommendation signified).—(*Mr. Elliot.*)

Debate arising.

And, it being after Midnight, and objection being taken to Further Proceeding, the Debate stood adjourned.

Debate to be resumed this day.

Adjourned at fifteen minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Tuesday, 28th July, 1903.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Bournemouth Corporation Tramways Bill [H L.]. Commons, Amendments considered, and agreed to.

Great Central Railway Bill. Reported, with Amendments.

Gateshead Corporation Bill; Erith Tramways and Improvement Bill; Kingston-upon-Hull Corporation Bill; Coventry Electric Tramways Bill; South Yorkshire Joint Railways Bill; Dover Corporation Bill; Sheffield Corporation Bill. Reported, with Amendments.

Public Offices (Dublin) Bill. Reported, without Amendment, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Thursday next.

Castleblayney, Keady, and Armagh Railway (Extension of Time) Bill. Reported, without Amendment.

North Eastern Railway Bill; Cork Harbour Bill. The King's consent signified; and Bills reported, with Amendments

Ulster and Connaught Light Railways Bill. Reported, with an Amendment.

Alexandra Park and Palace Bill. Read 3^a, and passed.

Hastings Harbour Bill [H.L.]. Read 3^a, and passed, and sent to the Commons.

Baker Street and Waterloo Railway (Extension of Time) Bill. Read 3^a, with the Amendments, and passed, and returned to the Commons.

Rothesay Corporation Order Confirmation Bill; Scottish Episcopal Clergy Widows' and Orphans' Fund Order Confirmation Bill. Brought from the Commons.

Birmingham Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Exeter Corporation Bill [H.L.]. Returned from the Commons agreed to, with Amendments.

Chatham and District Light Railways Bill [H.L.]; Willesden Urban District Council Bill [H.L.]. Returned from the Commons agreed to, with Amendments. The said Amendments considered, and agreed to.

Rothesay Corporation Order Confirmation Bill (No. 180); Scottish Episcopal Clergy Widows' and Orphans' Fund Order Confirmation Bill, (No. 181). Read 1^a; to be printed, and (pursuant to the Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899) deemed to have been read 2^a (The Lord Balfour); and reported from the Committee.

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 8) Bill. House in Committee (according to order): Bill reported without Amendment: Standing Committee negatived; and Bill to be read 3^a on Thursday next.

Gas Orders Confirmation (No. 2) Bill [H.L.]. Commons, Amendments considered (according to order), and agreed to.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

TRADE REPORTS.

Annual Series—No. 3047. France (Marseilles); No. 3048. China (Chungking).

LOCAL TAXATION (IRELAND).

Returns for the year 1901–1902.

SOUTH AFRICA.

Correspondence relating to a proposal to employ Indian coolies under indenture on the railways in the Transvaal and the Orange River Colony.

Presented [by Command], and ordered to lie on the Table.

BOROUGH FUNDS BILL,

Returned from the Commons, with the Amendment agreed to.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (TRANSFER OF POWERS) BILL.

Returned from the Commons, with the Amendments agreed to.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Speaker.

MILITARY LANDS BILL.

Reported from the Standing Committee without further Amendment: The Report of the Amendment made in Committee of the Whole House to be received on Thursday next.

LIGHT RAILWAYS BILL [H.L.].

Reported from the Standing Committee without Amendment, and to be read 3ª on Thursday next.

BILLS OF EXCHANGE ACT, 1882, AMENDMENT BILL [H.L.].

A Bill to amend the Bills of Exchange Act, 1882, was presented by the Lord Chancellor; read 1ª; and to be printed. (No. 179.)

LONDON EDUCATION BILL.

[Second Reading.]

Order of the day for the Second Reading read.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (The Marquess of LONDONDERRY): My Lords, when in December last I supported the Motion of the noble Duke behind me for the second reading of the Education Bill for England and Wales, I fear I trespassed upon your Lordships' indulgence at a most unpardonable length; but I felt that I was dealing with a subject of great magnitude, for that Bill comprised no less than 27 clauses, and it reconstructed the greater part of our educational system in this country, co-ordinating all grades of education under one authority, and to a great extent changing the whole management of our educational system in England and Wales. On the present occasion I have no intention of trespassing on your indulgence to the same length, for the simple reason that, although this Bill is one of great importance, it merely asks your Lordships to apply the provisions of last year's Act, with certain alterations, to London. The Act of last year contained matters of a controversial character, but those matters were discussed so fully and debated at such length that I do not propose to enter into any of them on the present occasion.

The matters upon which great debate arose last year were these—the religious instruction in those schools, colleges or hostels for higher education which have been provided by the local authority; the management of voluntary public elementary schools; the maintenance of voluntary schools by the local authorities, and the attached conditions, of which the following gave rise to most prolonged controversy—(*a*) the appointment and dismissal of teachers by the managers subject to a right of veto (extending only to educational considerations) in the local authority; (*b*) the question of the teacher's residence and that of wear and tear repairs; (*c*) the appointment of assistant teachers by the managers. without reference to religious belief, and the appointment of pupil teachers by the local authority if there are more candidates than vacancies; (*d*) the control of religious education by the whole body of managers, including the non-foundation managers; (*e*) the provisions as to new schools and enlargements; (*f*) the provisions for deciding the question whether schools are necessary; (*g*) the apportionment of fees; (*h*) the question of schemes for Education Committees; and (*i*) the definition of elementary schools and the age limit for elementary education. These questions were fully discussed last year, and as this Bill applies the principle of last year's Act to London, I will not go over the ground again.

The first question which I think will very likely arise in the minds of noble Lords opposite is, why was not London included in the Bill of last year? The answer to that is simple. In the first place, the question of education in London and the abolition of the London School Board is one of such magnitude that there might have been great delay in getting the Bill passed through Parliament if London had been dealt with in last year's measure. But there is another and more practical answer. Had we included London in the Bill of last year, how were we to deal with the metropolitan boroughs, which, as your Lordships are aware, are the same in London as the municipal boroughs in the country? If London had been included in the Bill of last year, could there have been given to the councils of the metropolitan boroughs the powers of the local education authority for all parts of the principal Act? If your Lordships will consider that question, I think you will unhesitatingly arrive at the conclusion that there could not have been given those powers, for if that had been done there would have been virtually twenty-nine School Boards controlling the education of London, and twenty-nine systems of education with large variations in rating, while the London County Council would have been deprived of all the powers that are enjoyed by the County Councils in the country.

In considering the framing of a Bill for London the choice lay between an *ad hoc* authority and the control of the London County Council with the boroughs represented. I will first of all deal with the question of an *ad hoc* authority. To my mind an *ad hoc* authority to have control of the whole of the educational system of London would have been an absolute impossibility. If we cast our minds back to the Act of 1870 we find that it was only owing to the fact that there were not then in existence the public bodies that we now have that the education authorities of that day were invented. The whole position has changed since 1870, and although it may be said that the School Board system has worked satisfactorily in the past, I do not think it would have been possible under the present system for the School Board for London, or anybody elected *ad hoc*, to have been the authority for education in London. If an *ad hoc* body had been possible, I have no hesitation in saying that I should have desired to see the London School Board the education authority for London, with increased powers. I may perhaps be prejudiced. I have myself from practical experience, a sincere admiration for the great work that has been done in the past by the School Board for London. I know well the zeal and the energy with which each individual member has discharged his onerous and arduous duties, and I confess it is with great sorrow that I see a body which has done such good work, so to speak disestablished; but I hope those who have done so much for the education of London in the past will be found ready to continue that invaluable assistance on the new authority.

If we had given increased powers to the London School Board, we should have struck a serious blow at technical education in London, which, as your Lordships are aware, has been carried on by the London County Council now for the past ten years with the most unqualified success. I think it would have been unwise to have deprived that body of the control it has. Then, again, if we had had as the education authority for London a body elected *ad hoc* we should have perpetuated the severance between the calls on the public for education and other calls—a very serious difficulty. I consider that education should be one of the many calls on the public purse which should be dealt with by one great authority. There was only one body which could be the education authority—namely, the supreme body of London, the London County Council, and that authority in adding to its work the control of education will be assuming a function which it is its duty to undertake. I think time will prove how absolutely necessary it was to co-ordinate all grades of education under one authority.

Your Lordships probably have fresh in your minds the decision given last year known as the Cockerton Judgment. The difficulty arose owing to the fact that the London School Board, in its anxiety to discharge its duties thoroughly, overstepped its functions and undertook duties which it could not legally carry out. At the present moment we have a difficulty at the Board of Education with what is known as the Hilldrop-road Pupil Teacher Centre. The noble Lord opposite, the Chairman of the London School Board, is well aware of the difficulties which have arisen in connection with that centre. There is a Bill now before Parliament, as to the chances of the passing of which I can predict nothing, on this subject; but I will state what has occurred in order to show your Lordships the difficulties which might arise in the future unless the various grades of education were co-ordinated. The site of the Hilldrop-road Pupil Teacher Centre was obtained by compulsory powers in 1900, and was subject to a restriction that during fifty years it should not be used otherwise than for a pupil teacher centre. The plans were approved by the Board of Education on 23rd December, 1901, and building was apparently begun at once.

In June, 1902, the auditor of the Local Government Board, Mr. Cockerton, disallowed a certain payment in respect of the centre, giving full reasons, but the School Board proceeded with the work. On 26th July an injunction was granted by Mr. Justice Farwell restraining the School Board from spending any more of the produce of the local rates on the building. An appeal to the Supreme Court was heard by Lords Justices Vaughan Williams, Romer, and Mathew, and dismissed. Virtually, the whole of this difficulty arose through the London School Board exceeding its powers, and I am afraid that the epitaph of the London School Board with regard to that centre will be—

> "This man began to build, but was not able to finish."

In the circumstances we consider that the supreme body of London, the London County Council, must, and should be, the education authority for London.

The London County Council have always shown the keenest desire to be associated with all the great interests and duties connected with London. I read in a leading article in *The Times* only two or three days ago a sentence with which I absolutely agree. Alluding to the London County Council *The Times* said—

> "Whatever the faults which have been laid to their charge, their worst enemies have never charged them with want of public spirit or cowardly refusal to grasp their opportunities."

With that sentiment I think we must all concur. In 1895 the London County Council promoted Bills for acquiring the property of the water companies and becoming the water authority for the whole of water London. In 1896 the Bills were again promoted, and again in 1897. In 1899, 1900 and 1901 they promoted the London Water (Purchase) Bill, which dealt with the whole problem in one measure. Therefore I cannot but feel that in appointing the London County Council to be the education authority for London we are adding a responsible, important and onerous duty, which its members will be the last to desire to shirk or avoid. If I wanted corroboration of that statement, I should find it in a speech delivered by the noble Earl on the Cross Benches, who was the first Chairman of the London County

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Council. Speaking at Colchester on 16th May, 1902, Lord Rosebery said—

> "There is a Bill now before Parliament of the future of which I can predict nothing, of the chances of its passing into law I know no more than you do, but which, if passed, will intrust to your Municipal Council the incalculably important prerogative of supervising the education of your children. Well, on the whole, I rejoice in that provision, because I rejoice in all that gives strength and lustre to the municipal institutions of our country, in all that raises the character of our municipalities, and that makes men of all ranks, all degrees, and all abilities willing and anxious to take service among them. If to what you do already you have added the task of education, you will be advancing by leaps and bounds to that lofty position which every true patriot covets for the borough authorities of his native land."

Therefore, in appointing the London County Council the education authority for London, I think we can claim to have the support of its first able Chairman. The Government have been accused of not knowing their own minds with regard to the constitution of the education authority for London. Although I deny that there has been any vacillation, I admit that there has been a certain change of front. For that change of front I, and I alone, am responsible. I do not regret having undertaken that responsibility. I felt that I could not ask Parliament to pass this Bill without giving every consideration possible to the metropolitan boroughs and their very important interests. I felt that it was impossible to deny to those important boroughs those powers which the Act of last year gave to every municipal borough of over 10,000 inhabitants in the country.

I doubt, indeed, whether everyone has carefully considered the importance of these metropolitan boroughs, and realised their great magnitude, wealth, and duties. In order to prove to your Lordships that it was my duty to give every consideration to the importance of those bodies, I would ask you to allow me to compare the metropolitan boroughs with some of the towns and cities in England and Wales whose councils are their own educational authority. Islington has a population of 335,000; Lambeth, 302,000: Stepney, 299,000; Camberwell, 259,000; St. Pancras, 235,000; Wandsworth, 232,000; Hackney, 219,000; and Southwark, 206,000. I have taken eight of the most thickly populated boroughs to which I attach importance, and I considered that they were justified in having representation on the education authority. I would compare them with Bristol, which has a population of 329,000; with Bradford, which has a population of 280,000; West Ham, 267,000; Hull, 240,000; Nottingham, 240,000; Salford, 221,000; Newcastle, 215,000; and Leicester, 212,000. Every one of those towns in the provinces have their own education authority.

Then I turn to the question of rateable value. The Valuation List in force for April 6th, 1903, gives the assessable value of the City of Westminster as £5,500,000; that of the City of London, as £5,000,000; that of Kensington, as £2,500,000; and that of Islington as nearly £2,000,000. What do we find to compare with these figures? The assessments for the borough rates of Leeds, Bradford, Sheffield, Newcastle, Bristol, and Cardiff, on April 1st, 1900, were in each case less than £2,000,000. I, therefore, considered it my bounden duty to give every possible consideration to the interests of the metropolitan boroughs. When the present Prime Minister introduced the London Government Bill, which brought the metropolitan boroughs into existence, he said:—

> "It (*i.e.*, the City of London) already possesses the dignity which we desire to increase in the case of the vestries, and to give to the new authorities we propose to create. We propose that their constitution shall be practically identical with the constitution which our great municipal boroughs already possess. I look forward to these municipal boroughs having a great and most legitimate influence with the London County Council. The vestries already possess, except so far as police matters are concerned, the great urban powers possessed by other municipalities. The London County Council and these great municipalities—for great municipalities they will be—have to deal with the interests of the same population."

That is the reason why I took upon myself, in framing the Bill, the responsibility of claiming representation for those most important boroughs. When, however, the House of Commons as a whole showed a desire that the metropolitan boroughs should not be represented on the Education Committee, I considered that the only course the Prime Minister could take was to eliminate that representation from the Bill. I can only say for myself that I shall always feel deeply the generosity of my colleagues in the House of Commons for the loyal and able defence which they have made of the details of this measure, for which I alone am responsible, and if any censure is to be meted out to any Member of the Government, I am afraid I must ask you to pour it on my devoted head.

There are slight differences between the Bill which I am asking your Lordships to read a second time to-night and the Act of last year. The important metropolitan boroughs to which I have alluded are given powers that are not enjoyed by boroughs in the country. By Clause 2 they are given a voice in the selection of sites after consultation with the authority, and I think when we consider how the interests of those boroughs are bound up with this matter, it is not too much to ask your Lordships to grant them this privilege. Then, again, we have given them the choice of two-thirds of the managers as against one-third given to the boroughs in the country. The London County Council also has an advantage given to it over other County Councils, inasmuch as there is no limit to the rate to be raised for higher education, and they also enjoy the advantages that are enjoyed with regard to rating by the Borough Councils.

It is, of course, too early to prognosticate as to what may be the future of the Act which your Lordships passed last year, but the short experience we have had of it at the Board of Education has inspired the hope that it will prove to work satisfactorily and for the good of the country. We have already had proofs of the great advantages of the co-ordination of all grades of education. The authorities are now preparing pupil teacher schemes for education which could not be carried out before, and we are in hopes that pupil teachers will now receive that sound education which is so absolutely necessary for those to possess who are responsible for the instruction of the young. It is a question of such importance that your Lordships and the country at large should realise what has been done in the short time at our disposal for the purpose of improving the system of education of teachers. I have no doubt your Lordships read with great interest the able speech of my colleague, Sir William Anson, in the House of Commons, in which he went fully into that question. When we were discussing the Bill of last year a certain doubt was expressed as to whether it would not result in levelling down education; but I hope that as a matter of fact we are levelling up education, and raising the standard of efficiency in each and every school.

Your Lordships will all have read with great interest the letter addressed by the noble Earl, Lord Rosebery, to the London County Council, which speaks volumes for the generosity of those who desire to see the highest branches of our education in this country placed on a proper footing. I think the noble Earl will not contradict me when I say that if his hopes are to be realised, as I sincerely hope they will be, it will be owing to our having placed the whole system of education upon a sound basis, in such a way as we are able to do under the Act of last year and under the present measure. With regard to the administration of the Act of last year, we at the Board of Education have again, I think, to congratulate ourselves. I do not deny that we have had to encounter difficulties, and there may be difficulties in the future; but taking the reception which the measure has met with as a whole, we have every reason to congratulate ourselves. The great majority of the local authorities in the country have devoted themselves to their duties with great ability and energy, and they have accepted the invitation which I held out to them last year to co-operate and make use of the whole machinery of the Board of Education. I have hopes from the reports I have received that that co-operation is taking place, with the result that efficiency in education will be promoted, and the system of overlapping and dual inspectorships will be done away with.

But, although I trust that we may, to a certain extent, economise in matters of this kind, I do not for one moment hold out any idea to the House that there is any likelihood that there will be any decrease of expenditure. I hope there may be, but I cannot venture for one moment to anticipate that such will be the case.

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On the other hand, however, I think I can assure your Lordships that the country will get a better return for its money under the new system of education than in the past. I do not think I need detain your Lordships at any greater length. I hope that this Bill when passed will achieve the best results—the results we all desire to achieve, although we may not all agree as to the manner in which we are endeavouring to achieve them. I believe that in the future, when the heat of controversy and political feeling has abated, and these measures have been given a fair chance, the country will realise that the Government have grappled successfully with a problem that at times has appeared almost insoluble.

Moved, that the Bill be now read 2ª.—(*The Marquess of Londonderry.*)

*LORD REAY: My Lords, the noble Marquess has admitted that the Bill which is now before us is a very different Bill from that which was originally introduced in another place. He has fully accepted the responsibility for the changes. He has given us a picture of the importance of the metropolitan boroughs, and in the original Bill no doubt they were given important duties to perform, but I wonder whether the noble Marquess is persuaded that the metropolitan boroughs are satisfied with the position which they have obtained in the Bill now submitted to us. The original Bill, I think, would have proved unworkable. There would have been constant friction between the central authority and the metropolitan boroughs. Experience has proved that in London a central organisation is required to deal with elementary education. Elementary education alone is a work of such vast magnitude that it cannot be performed except by those who are prepared to give a great deal of their time to it. I do not think the noble Marquess, with his experience of the work of the School Board, will deny that it makes heavy demands on the time of the members of the School Board.

The ratepayers hitherto have been fortunate in securing for the administration of elementary education the services of men and women prepared to devote themselves to the work with great zeal, and the result is that London has a system of elementary education which can stand the test o' comparison with any foreign system. It has been constantly improved in all its departments; the physical, the mental, and the moral development of the children has been carefully considered. That result has been obtained because individual members of the London School Board were in close touch with and in charge of individual schools. Each school in London is in charge of a member of the Board, and this local work, as the noble Marquess knows, is of the greatest importance. Every member of the Board is acquainted with the difficulties and needs of the schools in his charge. He is able by his influence to diminish friction between parents, teachers, and scholars, and between teacher and teacher, and through him the central authority remains in close touch with every school. He does not usurp the functions of the managers, but he is the link between the managers of each school and the central authority, and in this way alone can you obtain the smooth working of a very complex machinery. The weekly meetings of the Board are only an infinitesimal part of its work, and not the most important part. The most important part of the work of the London School Board is performed in the committees, and it is the careful consideration, as the noble Marquess knows, which all the items on the agenda paper at the School Board meetings have received beforehand in the committees, which makes the meetings of the Board businesslike and short. The work of the Board is transacted by seven principal committees and by thirty-four committees and sub-committees. Only members of the Board serve on these committees. The County Council will have the power to appoint outsiders on these committees, but they will have to be linked on to the Education Committee by county councillors having seats on, and probably being chairmen of these various committees. The Education Committee of the London County Council will not be able to get through its work unless its members attend these various committees exactly in the same way as the members of the London School Board attend their committees. Now, it has been alleged that the School Board spends the morning in interviewing teachers, the afternoon in dealing with small repairs, and trusts nobody and delegates nothing. That picture is a ludicrous travesty of the reality, and I think the noble Marquess will admit this from his own experience. The Board, as he well knows, never interviews teachers. The teachers are interviewed by a committee before appointment, and do not absent themselves from their schools. Small repairs which are urgent are disposed of by the local clerk of the works, and those which are not urgent are explained in a report of the local clerk of the works to the head offi e. The Bcard cannot delegate the control of repairs which amount to about £120,000 a year. As regards not trusting anyone, I am sure the noble Marquess will admit that the Board fully trusts its teachers, that it allows the teachers very great latitude in settling their time tables in order to suit the various needs of various districts, and that there is great elasticity. Equally, the Board fully trusts its inspectors, who have the utmost freedom in explaining their own views even when they run counter to those of the Board. Further, no one can deny that the Board trusts the managers in the selection of assistant teachers, and in the selection of a head teacher from three candidates nominated by the Teaching Staff Committee. The nomination of school teachers is left to them, and they have the power of hearing complaints against teachers. The fact is that, f no one were trusted and nothing were delegated, the work would be simply impossible.

But it is one thing to trust the teachers and the inspectors, and another thing to abandon the control which you ought to exercise. The ratepayers have a perfect right to expect that the control shall not be exercised by deputy, but by their own representatives. You cannot leave it to experts. Experts are not infallible, and they will be the first to admit that control by elected representatives of the public is beneficial. Section 15 of the Act of 1870 gives the London School Board wide powers of delegation. If these powers have not been used more freely it is not because the Board could not exercise them, but because they felt that a wider delegation of their powers would not be consistent with their duty, with efficiency, and with the proper financial control which should be exercised by them. The noble Marquess has given great credit to the Technical Education Board for the work it has done. I cordially join with him in that well-deserved praise. What has been done by the Technical Education Board in recent years in providing facilities for secondary and technical education in London has been very satisfactory. But, as the noble Marquess is aware, the reports of special sub-committees of the Technical Education Board on commercial education, on the building trades, on the application of science to industry, show that London requirements are by no means as yet adequately met. I admit that one of the best features of this Bill, at least one to which we on this side of the House shall not object, is that it gives the London County Council unlimited rating powers and the means of meeting those deficiencies.

I am sure that, in order to fill up the gaps and to strengthen institutions which are now unable to give sufficient salaries, and which cannot provide laboratories in accordance with the high standard of recent scientific developments, the County Council will find full scope for expenditure. We cannot rely on the generous donor to endow London with institutions which on the Continent are organised and systematically kept up by funds derived from public sources. We cannot be placed at a disadvantage in this international competition. Our trades and industries must be placed on the same footing in order that they may hold their own in this struggle for existence, and the sinews of war must be forthcoming. Scientific research is admittedly one of the conditions of industrial progress, and I need only mention this very significant fact, that in some branches of technical education our students have to visit foreign institutions, and that instances be given in which one of the conditions of employment in England is that the candidates should have been trained abroad. Surely such a situation cannot be tolerated any longer.

Before I leave secondary education I wish to allude to the literary side of our secondary education. That must not be allowed to fall in the background, and I was glad to see that in the discussion in another place, when the Education Estimates were under consideration, the Board of Education seemed to be fully alive to their duty with regard to this branch of secondary education which in recent years has been rather overshadowed by scientific education. A survey of secondary education such as I suppose the new authority will probably organise will disclose many deficiencies, not only with regard to technical education, but also with regard to general secondary education.

Now, my Lords, I am entitled to ask, how is the County Council going to deal with all this work? On their Education Committee they will appoint a certain number of county councillors, who will have to be distributed among various sub-committees, and to take charge of schools. I take it for granted that the County Council will maintain the high standard of the education at present given in the Board schools; but, if that standard is to be maintained, county councillors who are on the Education Committee will soon realise that a great demand will be made on their time, and I doubt if they will find it possible to discharge other duties and to serve on the other committees.

You will probably have to increase the number of county councillors by one member for every electoral division. If that is done, then virtually you re-establish in another form the School Board which by this Bill you are abolishing, because those members will be elected *ad hoc* for educational purposes. The noble Marquess knows full well that unless the members of the London County Council visit the schools of which they are in charge, they cannot have sufficient knowledge of the education they have to control, and unless they remain in constant touch with the teachers, their decisions will carry no weight. They cannot delegate those duties to others. I am well aware that in many quarters the opinion is held that members of the School Board go more into detail than is really necessary, but the intimate acquaintance with the details of the work is, and has been, one of the reasons of the success and efficiency of the work of the School Board. In elementary education you cannot draw a hard and fast line between details and principles of school management, and the results the School Board have obtained are largely due to the strict supervision of details of administration. The noble Marquess is well aware that what appears insignificant to an outsider is often very material to the educational expert.

Let me ask, what will be the financial effect of this Bill? Do noble Lords opposite expect that the rate will be reduced? I believe that the only category of persons who look with favour on this Bill are those who expect to obtain higher salaries under the County Council's scale of salaries than they obtain under the more modest scale of salaries of the London School Board. If the County Council is going to level up, as I am sure they will, the voluntary schools, if secondary and technical education are to be aided, if you are to have an increase of expert officials because the members of the new education authority are not able to perform the work which all these years has been performed by members of the School Board there can be no chance of a reduction of expenditure, and it is much more likely that it will be increased.

Hitherto there has been in London no religious difficulty with regard to education, but by this Bill you draw London into the zone of religious controversy. Whatever financial benefits may accrue to voluntary schools, their autonomy, their independence, are imperilled, and the hybrid character which this legislation confers on them has not in it the elements of finality. I believe it is the first step towards the extinction of voluntary schools in this form, although I have no doubt that sooner or later real and true voluntary schools will again be established, because I am well aware that several sections of the community require them. The main object of the Act of last year was to improve the financial condition of voluntary schools. In order to effect this in London it was certainly not necessary to destroy the London School Board. I am quite sure that the School Board would have dealt very fairly with the voluntary schools. Whenever the interests of voluntary schools had to be considered by the School Board they always received careful consideration. The noble Marquess is well aware of an instance which I think I ought to give. The Board established twenty-three evening schools in voluntary school buildings, and left the nomination of the responsible teachers in the hands of the voluntary managers. That is an instance of the treatment which voluntary schools would obtain from public authorities if they only consented to trust them fully. If the School Board had been entrusted with the control of education in voluntary schools, they would, I am sure, have secured to those voluntary schools all the advantages which now accrue to children in provided schools.

During the existence of the London School Board the transfer of 164 voluntary schools to the Board was arranged, and eighty-three of the proposed transfers were not carried out. Of those 164 schools, only seventeen are still open. I know that with regard to the transfer of sixty-five Church of England schools the argument will probably be used that it illustrates the financial difficulties in which these voluntary schools were, but I think I may use another argument. I cannot believe that these Church of England schools would have been transferred to the School Board if those who transferred them had not been satisfied with the religious education which the children would receive after the transfer. And it cannot be said that the School Board was eager to annex voluntary schools, because in the case of thirty-six Church schools the attempt to transfer them failed. Voluntary schools had this guarantee—that their own managers and the clergy were well represented on the London School Board. I doubt very much whether many clergymen will seek election on the London County Council, so that on the County Council the voluntary schools will probably not have the direct representation which they had on the School Board. In another respect this transfer to the County Council is most disastrous, and that is with regard to the ineligibility of women. I do not believe in entrusting women indiscriminately with public duties, but I am bound to say from my experience on the London School Board that it is impossible to overrate—and I am sure the noble Marquess will agree with me—the value of the services of the women who serve on the London School Board. I consider that women are indispensable to secure efficiency when you are dealing with a large number of female teachers.

THE MARQUESS OF LONDONDERRY: Hear, hear!

*LORD REAY: To the debt of gratitude we owe to these women I do not think the noble Marquess contributes by this Bill, for women—although they may be elected on the Education Committees—are excluded from direct election to the educational authority. This Bill is also a disfranchising Bill. The franchise for the School Board is a lower franchise than that for the County Council. The electors for the School Board are—with the exception of the City—the ratepayers whose names are included in the ratebook which is in force a month before the elections, and they are about 10 per cent. more than the electors for the London County Council. A rough estimate shows that, under the new conditions, you eliminate from the franchise about 90,000 voters. I admit that there was a just complaint with regard to the size of the electoral areas for the School Board and the frequency of elections. But it would have been very easy to have had an election in every County Council division on the same day as the County Council election. You would then have had on the new educational authority fifty-nine members, and you could have given them the right of co-optation to ensure the representation of all interests. The noble Marquess said, very properly, that you could not take away from the County Council the control of secondary education. That could have been provided for by placing on the new authority a certain number of representatives of the County Council, and in that way you could have obtained a body competent to deal with the great problem of London education.

An argument which the noble Marquess has not used, but which has often been used, in favour of the abolition of the School Board is that the number of persons who recorded their votes at the elections was very low. It is an unfortunate fact that so small a proportion of the electors have shown their appreciation of the services of the School Board. But the voters who took part in the elections were those who cared for the educational work, and they returned to the London School Board representatives who took a real interest in their duties. With a larger poll the result of the elections might have been due to other influences not purely educational. I believe the noble Marquess will agree with me that the members of both parties on the School Board have displayed great public spirit and shown capacity to deal with the educational problem.

This Bill weakens the control of the ratepayers over educational expenditure, and the direct control of their representatives over education. It doubles the work of the County Council, and it does not give any satisfaction to the metropolitan boroughs or to the County Council. This is not the original Bill; it is the result of "inquiry" in another place, and in its present form I do not see why it was not made part of the Bill of last year. It destroys an administrative body which has accumulated experience, which has enjoyed the confidence of London parents, and which has been the means of rescuing from ignorance and vice thousands of young Londoners; and it destroys it at a moment when efficient elementary and other than elementary education is admitted to be one of the most urgent needs of the country. It deprives London of an organisation which had solved a difficult problem. We on this side of the House do not wish to incur any responsibility for this vandalism, and we are confident that whatever may be the verdict given by your Lordships to-day, the ultimate verdict will be one in favour of the opposition which we are in duty bound to offer to this measure.

Amendment moved—

"To leave out the word 'now' and add at the end of the Motion the words, 'this day three months.'"—(*Lord Reay.*)

*THE LORD ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY: My Lords, I have listened with very great care and respect to the arguments of my noble friend who has just sat down. I hope he will pardon me if I say that looking to the controversy which has been, and is, raging on this subject outside the walls of Parliament, I believe that what he has said to-night will be regarded as an objection to details rather than an objection based on the fundamental principles of this Bill. The details are of the greatest importance; I do not underrate them in the least. The relation of the County Council to the Borough Councils as constituting the joint authority which will now be constituted instead of the School Board which will pass away is, I admit, a matter of the very highest importance. But when we look at what is happening outside I maintain that these are not the matters which are at present stirring the minds of those whose opposition to this Bill is constantly referred to as the main evidence that the Government is wrong in the action it took last year, and is taking this year. The arguments of my noble friend against the Bill—for the details of which I hold no special brief—are not the kind of force which has drawn multitudes through the streets to attend monster meetings in Hyde Park or the Albert Hall. They are not the kind of arguments which mainly find place in the organs of Nonconformity, which unite so largely in their opposition to this Bill. Still less are they the kind of arguments which would have led men law-abiding citizens in all ordinary concerns, to take the extreme course of pledging themselves to refuse to pay a rate levied under an Act such as this. In short, if we want to ascertain and to understand the objection which is felt to the Bill now introduced by the Government, we must look outside the range of criticism which has been launched against it in the speech of my noble friend.

To me no stranger problem has presented itself in the modern history of England than the problem which is before us at this moment—the strange spectacle of vast numbers of honest, thoughtful, law-abiding citizens declaring that they will do anything rather than pay a penny towards the furtherance of the policy which this Bill promotes, and at the same time the total absence of support for that movement on the part of those who in other matters we regard as responsible men. Every one of your Lordships must have found, as I have, that in the ordinary intercourse with his acquaintances, of whatever political party or section, he fails to find a single public man who is prepared to advocate the cause which is being so largely advocated and promoted outside by those who are agitating in this particular matter. That problem seems to me to be a strange one when I contrast the kind of denunciation of this movement which in daily conversation is current among all responsible public men with the total silence of such men outside upon public platforms. My noble friend is one of those whose opinions on such matters as this Bill deals with are listened to with respect by every one who has watched his educational career, and who knows how splendidly he has served the country in the position he holds as chairman of the London School Board—what a large and wise view he shows himself to be taking alike of undenominational and denominational schools with which, directly or indirectly, he has so much to do. But I do say that, if we are to deal with this matter in a manner which corresponds at all with the manner in which it is being dealt with out of doors, we must go back beyond the kind of subsidiary questions with which his speech dealt and look at the principles which are apparently inspiring the opposition, which has reached such large dimensions, to the Bill out of doors.

The real objection to this measure is directed against its first clause. It is as part of the educational policy of last year, and not as regards the details of administration as applied to London, that the opposition has reached the dimensions which it has at present attained. It has been frequently said by the opponents of the measure that this is last year's Bill made worse, because it is applied to London. That is a proposition I wish to deal with. In the current objections to the whole educational policy of the Government there are two arguments which find a prominent place, and to both of which I think very great respect is due. They were current last year in Parliament and outside, and they are current still. The first was the argument that a Nonconformist child or a Nonconformist would-be teacher is frequently placed in a position in which no school is accessible to him or her except a school which is under Anglican control. I have always felt that was an objection for which there was a great deal to be said, and those who have supported the policy of the Government have tried to meet what we felt to be, so far as it goes, a real grievance. And we have, or rather the Government Bill has, done a great deal to meet this difficulty. Those who proclaim that the new arrangements make no concession to the feeling of Nonconformists have apparently forgotten that every Nonconformist pupil teacher now for the first time is placed in precisely the same position as a pupil teacher belonging to the Church of England. Besides this, it is open to every board of management to appoint assistant teachers from outside as well as from those belonging to the denomination, even if the trust deed of their school says that the teachers should be limited to the Church of England. In addition to these changes, the old conscience clause of course remains in force, with the result that any parent who does not wish his child to obtain denominational teaching, is able to withdraw that child from the denominational teaching given in a particular day school.

But does the alleged grievance which is stated to exist in the country with regard to the only available school being a denominational one exist at all in regard to London? Practically the overwhelming majority of London teachers and London children attend Board Schools, and therefore are in no way subject to such a possible grievance. It is impossible to find a street in London which is not within reach of an undenominational Board School, where any person may send his child, and where anyone duly appointed, whatever his creed, may receive instruction in the art and craft of the teacher. Therefore, whatever its weight in regard to the Bill which passed last year affecting the rest of the country this objection, so far as it affects Nonconformists, has simply disappeared altogether as regards London. Knowing, however, that that objection is still being used against this Bill, I think it right to call attention to it. It is really impossible to manufacture that grievance into a reality under this Bill.

Then there is another objection to which I wish briefly to refer. It is one which is constantly urged, and it is really a matter of fair argument, with respect to the Bill of last year. The argument was this—that the Church was not entitled to claim as subscriptions given for Church education as such, anything like all the amount which has in recent years been given for the support of denominational schools throughout the country. I think I have a right to refer to that, for I for one, have reiterated again and again that we have no right to claim all that money as being contributed by those whose sole desire was to support denominational education. A great many people have subscribed with the object not of promoting denominational education, but of keeping out a rate which they thought would fall more heavily upon them than the subscription which they have been in the habit of giving, and that is an important deduction which must always be made when we are totalling up the amount, though, even when the deduction has been fully made, an enormous amount has been subscribed by private persons during the last thirty years with the definite object of promoting denominational education as such.

But when you come to London the objection to describing such subscriptions as being the Church's own gift to education absolutely and entirely disappears. Not a penny has been subscribed in London during the past thirty years towards the maintenance of these Church schools by any person who has not at the same time been rated for the Board schools. They subscribed, of course, because they wished to maintain the teaching of definite religion, the religious principle for which they cared, and they so subscribed in spite of the fact that they were paying rates. That is an argument which, I think, is not sufficiently remembered in this matter. Nor do people realise the amount of money which has been so spent in London in regard to these denominational schools. If we were to say that £2,000,000 have been subscribed in London for the building and maintenance of Church schools since the Act of 1870 was passed, we should certainly be under the mark; and that money was subscribed by people who were, as I have said, heavily rated for Board Schools all the time. This is another fact which is not sufficiently borne in mind. I have in my hand a list of eleven schools taken from among those which have spent large sums during the last thirty years on buildings, quite apart from maintenance. Four of these have spent among them £35,970. The following letter, which I received to-day, is another case:—

> "Since the 1870 Act we have certainly spent not less than £15,000, exclusive of site, on the buildings of our schools; and on a mission school in the poorer part of our parish (which is holding its own splendidly in spite of palatial Board schools) not less than £2,500. So far as apparatus, &c., is concerned, we have kept things up to date, and spent not less than an average amount of £950 a year on this item alone. Our voluntary contributions, irrespective of all grants, average little short of £1,000 per annum."

If such amounts have been eagerly and continuously subscribed, I think it is plain that we have an unanswerable case with regard to these voluntary schools. We are told that if the present Government gives place to another set of men hostile to the principle of the Bill they will repeal the Act of last year and this Bill, and, as they express it, put things straight. I think it is fair to ask what you are going to do with schools like those which I have described. Two millions have been subscribed by people who gave that money for the support of schools in which definite religious teaching can be given, on the lines of the Church of England, and they have at the same time paid the education rate. Are you going to say that these schools are to be taken out of the predominant control of those who have contributed to their support, and handed over absolutely to a public authority which may or may not appoint teachers who are competent to give religious teaching, or whose religious beliefs correspond with the principles upon which those schools have been built and maintained so long? I think we have a right to an answer on the point before rejecting a Bill of this kind. Of course, by the Bill of last year we have largely popularised the management of "voluntary" schools.

We have arranged with regard to these schools that they shall have publicly elected managers in addition to those who represent the denomination, then that the whole body, including the publicly elected managers, should choose the head teacher, and then, whether the decision arrived at was right or wrong, that this body should control (subject to the trust deed) the whole religious education given in that school. We, in short, are doing exactly what was recommended as the proper course to pursue by a leading Member of those who have opposed the Government policy. The point was discussed six years ago when the controversy was not so burning as it is now, when politicians were better able to look at it calmly and fairly, and when those who shared the opinions of noble Lords opposite were asked to state what could be their possible future policy in this matter. Mr. Asquith said, speaking in 1897—

> "I have never gone the length of thinking or of saying, nor I believe have any of my friends, that that principle of popular control ought to be carried to the length of subverting the denominational character of the schools. I think that would be an unfair thing, an unjust thing; that it would in effect disestablish the denominational character of the schools, and transform them, and practically put them on the same footing as the Board schools of the country. I agree that if you are to have a denominational system, then the particular tenets of the particular religious faith must be taught; and that those tenets may be taught in good faith, with enthusiasm and with zeal, it is not unnatural that the managers of these schools should claim to have a preponderating voice in the choice of teachers."

No words could better describe what has been now done; the denomination is not allowed to have complete control, but it is to have what Mr. Asquith calls "a preponderating voice," and the denominational teaching is to go on. But now all this is changed, and we are told that this denominational teaching is wrong, an injustice, and an evil, that it is contrary to the fundamental principle of citizenship if any man has to pay a rate any portion of which can go towards the support of schools in which denominational teaching is given.

LORD TWEEDMOUTH: May I ask when Mr. Asquith made that speech?

*THE LORD ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY: In November, 1897.

LORD TWEEDMOUTH: There was no question then of voluntary schools being relieved from subscriptions.

*THE LORD ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY: I entirely agree that the position has changed, and I do not wish to press Mr. Asquith's argument further than it will fairly go. But it would be absolutely untrue to say that voluntary schools are now relieved from the need of subscriptions, and the policy foreshadowed by Mr. Asquith in that memorable speech was that the denominational system must go on, and that there should be a predominant voice left to those who represent the schools. We are now told that it is a matter of conscience to refuse absolutely to pay a rate which can even in the smallest degree be so employed. I do not want to go into metahpysical questions, but any of your Lordships who remember the discussions which have taken place at various times, both in philosophical and theological circles, as to the meaning of "conscience," will know that the conscience must be informed as well as active if it is to exercise its task fully. It was said by a very profound thinker nearly 300 years ago—

> "It is not enough that the conscience be taught by nature, but it must be . . . conducted by reason . . . and instructed by laws and sober principles, and then it is right and may be sure."

Therefore I venture to think that when we hear conscience spoken of as something which must be blindly followed, we ought to ask whether pains have been taken to see that that conscience has been not merely kept alive and active, but has also been duly informed.

We are reminded that in one noteworthy respect the Bill does nothing to diminish the grievance found in the Act of last year. I mean the application to teachers of what are called religious tests. I apologise for going back to that point, although it may be unnecessary to argue it in this House, and I do not know if we shall to-night hear any more of the question. It is taken for granted outside that practically nothing can be said for the imposition of religious tests upon Civil servants in any department of State. I entirely agree with that large principle that for Civil servants the imposition of a denominational or theological test is not merely an anachronism, it is a positive wrong; but surely it is mere pedantry to say that this is a principle which can be maintained in relation to those whose distinct work it is to give religious instruction, whether to old or young. Surely we are entitled to say that if a man is going to give religious teaching it shall be ascertained that he is qualified to give that teaching in a proper, straightforward, honest way. It seems to me mere pedantry to press the argument, with which I entirely agree as applied to the position of Civil servants, to the case of teachers for the particular work a religious teacher has to do. Be it remembered there is no part of a teacher's duty so difficult, none that requires so much training, none as to which it is more necessary to have qualification tested, than the duty of teaching religion to little children. If you say—and I am not now challenging the contention—that in provided or Board schools no such tests can be required or should be imposed, at least we may naturally ask you to keep alive and strong some schools where a religious basis is the principle of the trust deed, and religious teaching is definitely carried out day by day, not as a possibility depending upon the individual authority for the moment, but as a fundamental principle which cannot be departed from.

The noble Lord, the Chairman of the London School Board has reminded us how good is the religious teaching given in the London Board schools; and he will do me the justice to say that I have never failed to extol the excellence of the religious teaching, so far as the law allows it, given in the schools under the presidency of the noble Lord. But why is it that the teaching is so excellent? Because the field of teachers from whom selections have been made consists mainly of men and women carefully trained as to how to give that teaching. I have taken the pains to look into the facts, and I find that out of a total of 1,468 head teachers under the London School Board, 860, or about three-fifths of the whole, were trained in Church colleges, 303 came from the British and Foreign School Society colleges, where religious teaching is carefully given, seventy-three from Wesleyan colleges, ten from Roman Catholic colleges, and eighty-eight from undenominational colleges, while the untrained teachers muster 134. Why, it may be said, should this not go on under the new arrangements just as it has gone on hitherto? The reason is that you are now, most rightly, going to establish Day Training Colleges on every side, colleges, that is, giving no teaching in the art of imparting religious instruction to children, even if the colleges possess any religious character themselves; and before many years have passed the market for teachers, if I may use the word, will be flooded by teachers who have received no such training in religious education, and from among them you will often be obliged to make your selection; and I firmly believe that the time will come when those who at present oppose the policy of this Bill will be thankful that a large number of schools have maintained as a fundamental basis of their administration a test of the qualifications and fitness of the men and women whom they appoint to give relgious teaching in the schools. That is valuable in itself, and it is valuable in the stimulus and example it gives to provided schools standing beside the denominational schools. There cannot be any doubt that the maintenance of a high standard of religious teaching in Board schools has been to a large extent due in the past twenty years to the fact that those schools have stood in friendly rivalry alongside others in which religion has been the fundamental basis of the teaching, this becoming infectious and influencing the Board schools.

So much for tests. Now we are told it is distinctly and definitely wrong to pay for denominational teaching from the rates. You will remember how in the early debates of last session that principle was again and again maintained, overriding other arguments, and one of the foremost spokesmen against the Bill said—

> "I agree that the question of the authority—[he was speaking of representation and the rates]—is not really the most important part of the Bill. There is only one important question that divides us, that of rate-aid for teaching religion of which a large portion of the ratepayers do not approve. That is the whole question so far as we are concerned."

In answer to that I need hardly stop to point out that the proposal is not peculiar, still less is it novel. It is the universal custom in Scotland, where the government of schools is in the hands of the people, but rate-aid is given for denominational teaching. Obviously the fact that the government is wholly, and not, as with us, only partially, in popular hands does not affect the fundamental principle; for if it is a matter of conscience that not a sixpence from the rates should be given for denominational teaching, the question of authority does not matter. But I do not dwell on the Scotch analogy; nor upon the hugely important fact that even when you assess at its highest the amount paid for denominational teaching given in non-provided schools, the total amount so expended is far out-weighed by the annual cost of the buildings which the Church contributes for the educational system of the nation.

Are those who are active in urging this objection profoundly convinced that as a matter of conscience this aid to any and every form of denominational teaching must be resisted? Then are they aware that for many years the London School Board have maintained schools for members of the Jewish faith where a syllabus is used drawn up under the auspices of the Chief Rabbi and a Jewish Board of Education? These schools have been not only subsidised from the rates, but built and maintained out of the rates to meet the peculiar need that exists in regions where the Jewish faith is strong. I do not know exactly all the details as they exist to-day; but I find that ten years ago the School Management Committee called the attention of the Board to the fact that—

> "Jewish teachers, because they are Jews or Jewesses, are appointed to teach Jewish children."

And further that—

> "The syllabus of Bible instruction is departed from by the total omission of all teaching from the New Testament."

I believe it is the case that some modification has been made in recent years, but Lord Reay will correct me if am wrong. I believe that the syllabus drawn up as I have said is used in the schools attended by Jewish children, and Jewish fasts and festivals are observed in such schools atlhough they are also attended by many Christian children. What would be said if we asked that schools should be closed on, say, Ascension Day? Jewish fasts and festivals are observed by the closing of these schools, and though I do not suppose the teachers are actually appointed upon denominational tests (for that would be clearly contrary to the whole theory of the School Board), practically they would seem in large measure to belong to the Jewish faith. I take a single school, and out of ten teachers I find the names of Abraham Levy, David Moses, Isidore Jacobs, Joseph Bernberg, Alfred Tobias, and B. Lewis, and we can therefore experience no difficulty in conjecturing from whom the children get religious teaching. I commend the arrangement; I think the School Board is right in meeting a practical difficulty in this way; but to me it seems strangely in conflict with the principle which lays down as a matter of conscience that not a penny of the rates should be given for teaching that is not absolutely undenominational.

I believe the opposition to this Bill is very real; but are those who are directing it fully conscious that they are actuated less by opposition to the educational system proposed by the Government than by opposition to the principle of an Established Church? Anyone who reads the report of the speeches made at the recent meeting in the Albert Hall against the Bill must find it hard to realise that he is reading educational matter at all, so directly were the speeches couched in mere terms of antagonism to the Established Church. I do not complain of attacks upon the Church. The question whether an Established Church should continue is an arguable one, and there is a great deal to be said on either side. It is right that it should be argued by the citizens at large, and at all kinds of meetings; but I do object to that far larger question being argued to this extent upon an Education Bill like this. The question whether this Bill ought to pass, and the question whether we ought in England to have a National Church are questions not wholly unconnected, perhaps, but certainly not so closely connected as to justify their being welded into one. Certainly we have a right to criticise the basis of the arguments used in order to find out whether they rest on the education question or on the question whether or not the Established Church should continue to hold the position in the nation it now does.

Few things in my life have been more distressing and painful to me, and I am sure I can speak for my colleagues on the Episcopal Bench; few things have been more painful than to find ourselves placed in opposition to religious men, from whose religious teaching, speaking for myself, I have often learned so much, and to whom as fellow teachers and as ministers of our Christian faith I have learned to look with the most profound respect and gratitude. Nothing has been more painful to me than to find myself in opposition to men whom I desire so willingly to listen to. But the principles which are at stake in this whole controversy do seem to me to be so vital that I feel bound to take the line that I have taken in the absence of a definite constructive policy on the other side. Were such definite constructive policy before us from the other side, I should wish to give it, not only consideration, but the most favourable consideration I possibly could, in order, if possible, to allay the strife which is now going on. But it is indisputable that there has been no such constructive policy laid down as an alternative to the plan which, last year and this year, has emanated from the Government of the day. I therefore have found it impossible to withhold my support from a plan which seemed to me, whilst by no means faultless in its details, to be a fair attempt to deal with an extremely complicated and difficult question. The present strife is heated, but I believe that heat to be due in a large measure to other than educational causes. I look forward, not without hope, to the time when I shall find myself, and others of my friends will find themselves, standing side by side with these very men, from whom at present we are compelled to differ, in a vigorous endeavour to promote that kind of education for England which, whilst it safeguards religious teaching in every school of the land, shall at the same time do its very best to further in every possible way the training of wise and capable citizens to take their part in the general social life and work of the Empire as a whole.

LORD TWEEDMOUTH: My Lords, I think the speech with which the noble Marquess moved the Second Reading of this Bill was one of the most original speeches that have ever been made by a responsible Minister of the Crown in introducing an important measure to Parliament. For, my Lords, his first question was. Why was not London included in the Bill of last year? And he proceeded to answer it by saying that London was not included because it was necessary to deal with the London boroughs. He then entered into a eulogy of the London boroughs and spoke of their importance and of the great difference there was between them and the boroughs in the country. I so far agree with the noble Marquess; there is a great difference between those authorities. but it is all in favour of the boroughs in the country. The London boroughs have not the position, the power, or the duties that the great country boroughs have, and are altogether subsidiary organisations. After all, the whole reason the noble Marquess brought forward for not including London last year was on account of the London boroughs, and I admit that the London boroughs bulked very largely in this Bill when it was first introduced. but they have to all intents and purposes dropped out of the Bill altogether, and I contend that the speech of the noble Marquess was a speech, not in support of the Bill as it now stands, but in support of the Bill as it was introduced into the House of Commons some months ago. The noble Marquess really supported the Bill in that form and apologised to the House for the changes which had been forced upon the Government, as I understood, greatly against their will.

I come now to the speech of the most rev. Primate. I am the first to acknowledge the conciliatory and statesmanlike tone of the speech, and for my part I am exceedingly sorry that it should have fallen to me to have to reply to it. But I shall endeavour to put the case of those who differ from the most rev. Primate in as calm and as conciliatory a manner as he did, for, after all, I am sure the wish of everyone who is interested in this subject is that the education of the children should be the first and the main object in spite of our personal or Party contentions. The most rev. Primate called attention to the fact that there were a vast number of law-abiding citizens in this country who did feel very strongly with regard to the Act that was passed last year and which is now about to be extended to London, and expressed surprise at the length to which they were prepared to go. He did not understand that they could have their feelings so moved that they should be willing to run the risk of even breaking the law in order to protest against what they considered to be an injustice. The most rev. Primate said that it is a most extraordinary thing that we do not meet these people, that your Lordships do not meet them; and he wondered how that was. Well, my Lords, I can tell you why. It is because we are not Nonconformists. We, I am afraid, move in somewhat different circles. While they are members of great Free Churches the most rev. Primate has the proud privilege of being the head of a mighty and a very privileged Church, and ——

*THE LORD ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY: I do not wish to be misunderstood. May I therefore explain that I meet Nonconformist friends every day—Nonconformists who are Members of the House of Commons or who hold other very responsible positions. I have the advantage of knowing scores of such friends, and of being in constant touch with them. The point I wished to make was this, that men who hold those responsible positions and are Nonconformists will all, in private, tell you that they entirely disapprove of what is taking place, but that they re-remain silent with respect to this particular matter on public platforms in the country.

LORD TWEEDMOUTH: I imagine that the reason some of these men remain silent on the platforms in the country with regard to this subject is that they individually are not prepared to go to the length that some of their fellows are. I am obliged to put myself in the same category. I am not prepared to go that length, but I am able to understand the position of those who are, and I think the fact that so many men who are generally law-abiding citizens of the first and highest description are willing to go to extreme lengths is a matter which deserves serious consideration. Then the most rev. Primate rather inferred that this was the real question in debate. I do not think that is quite the fact. Though it is a main question, the question of the authority, so far as this Bill is concerned, is also a main question and one which must not be set aside. The most rev. Primate said that the grievance of the children who found themselves in the 8,000 parishes in the country where there are only Church schools to attend, is one which only applies in a small degree to London, that it is non-existent practically in the Metropolis, because of the vast number of undenominational schools. I do not doubt that that particular grievance is greatly diminished in London, but I would venture to appeal to my noble friend the Chairman of the London School Board to bear me out in the assertion that, though it is a smaller grievance in London, yet it is one which is seriously felt. There are districts in London in which it is difficult indeed for a Nonconformist parent to find a school other than a Church school to which he can send his child.

What I desire to do is very briefly, and, I hope, very temperately to put the case of those who do feel themselves impelled to a breach of the law as a protest against the Act of last year, and of those who, I fear, will also be impelled to take a similar course here in London if this Bill becomes law in its present form. These men feel—and the most rev. Primate admitted it—that this education rate is really an outrage on their consciences. Their view is this, that by the Act of 1870 an agreement was come to, a compromise arrived at, which was binding to parties on both sides, and that the Act of 1902 and this Bill set the denominational schools free without giving any equivalent whatever. The point, I think, can be easily put by a quotation from a speech by Mr. Gladstone, at the time of the Act of 1870. This is what Mr. Gladstone said—

> "We shall take care that under no circumstances shall the public grants be allowed so to operate as entirely to supply, together with the school pence, the sum necessary to support those schools, and that there shall always remain a void which must be filled up by free private contributions, and without which those schools would no longer deserve the character of voluntary."

It is now contended that that bargain has gone, and that the whole of the charge for these schools is thrown upon the public purse in some form. I have in my hand a Report of the London Diocesan Board of Education which in the most curious way shows the falling off in the subscriptions in the Diocese of London itself. This is a summary of Church collections, and it shows that during the four years from 1897 to 1900 inclusive the total contributions and collections in the Churches of England in the Archdeaconries of London and Middlesex amounted to £6,487, or an average of some £1,620 per annum. In 1901 those collections fell to £241 11s. 6d. and in 1902 to £189 14s. 2d. I think that shows what the effect of these proposals with regard to education has been and how much they have diminished the voluntary contributions to schools from members of the Church of England. There is one paragraph in this report worth quoting to your Lordships as a proof that in the opinion of the Diocesan Inspector religious teaching in some of these schools does not reach a very high level. Here is a passage from the report—

> "There are infants who think our Lord was born last Christmas Day. I have even been told that it was our present King Edward who killed the Holy Innocents. Herod and Edward are quite similar enough to be confused by infants."

I do not think that that shows evidence of successful religious instruction in these schools. It is held that Parliament oversteps its province when it lays down that Nonconformists or any other citizens shall be rated for the direct support of sectarian teaching in which they do not believe. A subordinate of the noble Marquess recently wrote—

> "It is almost incredible that a law should be passed in this land of boasted freedom which compels a parent to pay for the proselytising of his own children, for that is what it comes to."

It cannot be denied that these proposals do really amount to a new endowment of the Church and to a new Church rate. I maintain that they also involve an outrage on the consciences of teachers, for after all, so far as the head teachers are concerned, in all these denominational schools you insist that they shall be members of one particular denomination. The most rev. Primate frankly said that the religious teaching given in the Board schools was of a very high level, and I would also venture to remind your Lordships that another right rev. Prelate, the Bishop of St. Asaph, absolutely suggested that the syllabus of the London School Board should be taken as a model and adopted as a means of compromise in Wales. If these men, who are not subject to such tests in the London School Board, are capable of giving such good religious instruction, instruction that is approved by the Episcopal Bench itself, surely you need have no fear for the future, and you will still have religious instruction suited to the needs of young people even if these tests are taken away, while at the same time the field of choice of teachers will be enormously enlarged. You would avoid all charge that you were imposing religious tests, and that teachers were induced to announce their adherence to a particular denomination in order that they might get promotion in the profession that they had chosen.

Surely it is a very great grievance that young persons entering the teaching profession who do not belong to the Church of England should for ever afterwards, unless they give up the doctrines of the sect to which they belong, and in which, perhaps, they were born, have to sacrifice the opportunity of rising to the highest places in a large number of schools. Then we say that when a school or any other institution is dependent for its existence or support on public money, public management must follow. It is not right that a private individual should step in and have the management and disposal of public money. Take this Bill itself. You have but a very small proportion of the managers of these voluntary schools appointed by the local educational authority. In London you will have, say, four managers appointed by the Church, one by the higher local authority, the London County Council, and one by the Borough Council. Representatives of the public, those who are responsible for the public purse, will always be in a minority. I hold that in matters of this sort the public should be represented by a majority of the managers, and we cannot do other than regret this provision in the Bill. It will not be denied that the Act of last year was the result of a bargain between the Government and the Church of England.

THE MARQUESS OF LONDONDERRY: No!

LORD TWEEDMOUTH: Again and again representatives of the Church of England were consulted, but Nonconformists were not consulted. It is felt by those who were not consulted that, not having been consulted, they cannot be bound by the terms of that bargain; and even that bargain, so far as the Church was concerned, was continually being improved upon to the advantage of the Church, for your Lordships will remember that as the Bill passed through this House last year additions were made to it at the very last moment which largely increased the benefit that the Church obtained under the Bill and which really enabled the Church almost to make a profit out of its schools. These considerations must introduce an element of disunion into the whole question of education, and one which must impair its efficiency.

We now come to the question of the authority, which I look upon as of equal importance to that section of the subject with which I have already attempted to deal. I think this question of London education is one which we ought to look upon not merely as a London question but as a national question, because whatever makes for good education in London must exercise a great influence on the country as a whole. I do not think it will be denied that the London School Board has set up a standard for elementary education throughout the length and breadth of the land. The Technical Education Board of the London County Council has also set a great example in the promotion of technical education. The London School Board has undoubtedly had a great and good influence on the voluntary schools in London, and if it had not been for the existence of the London School Board, I do not hesitate to say that those voluntary schools would have been even in a worse condition than they are now. I do not think anything speaks more eloquently as to the difference between the condition of those two classes of schools at the present moment than the fact that whilst in the Board schools you have one certified teacher for every fifty-one children, in the voluntary schools you have only one certificated teacher for every 131 children on the roll. Again, an ex-colleague of the noble Marquess has this year said that—

> "The London School Board was one of the most magnificent pieces of constructive work which had been accomplished in our time."

And yet it is that magnificent piece of constructive work that you are going to sweep away at a single blow. And why? Can it be shown that any other body is likely to do the work better? Is the County Council likely to do the work better? Is it likely to have it in its power to do the work better? In London you have some 2,000 educational institutions in all; you have some 20,000 teachers and about 1,000,000 pupils, and you have to deal with a sum of £4,000,000 per year, and you are proposing to throw the whole of this great work on to the London County Council. The London County Council is a pretty well worked body already. There are 137 Members and sixty-eight committees, and there were held last year 1,313 meetings of one sort and another. If this Bill becomes law any member of the London County Council, who takes upon his shoulders the work of education *plus* the work of the County Council, will have the whole of his time filled up to the exclusion of any other business whatever, whether it be private or public.

This sudden determination to hand over London's education to the County Council is surely a strange piece of inconsistency on the part of the Government. For the last six, seven, eight or nine years—as long as I have had the honour of a seat in this House—whenever it has been proposed to give the London County Council additional work, we have always been told that it was such an overworked body that it could not possibly undertake it. Lord Salisbury said the County Council was afflicted with megalomania, and could not possibly undertake additional work. The Colonial Secretary told us that if the members of the London County Council were archangels from Heaven they could not undertake more work, and I have an interesting quotation here from a speech by the noble Duke the Leader of this House, made in 1898, in which he said—

> "The County Council has had entrusted to it duties and powers sufficient to occupy the attention of any ordinary body. It has to deal with all those matters which are the common concerns of 4,500,000 people. It has to administrate a revenue and expenditure of £3,500,000. These duties are so large and multifarious that it has quite sufficient business, and quite sufficient important business, to occupy its whole and undivided attention."

And only last year, when it was proposed that the duty of looking after London's water supply—which, after all, is essentially a municipal matter—should be entrusted to the London County Council, it was stated that the County Council could not possibly undertake this work in addition to its other work. The County Council was, therefore, only given fourteen members on the London Water Board, but still, of course, this means an addition to its work. You have given it this addition, and you are going to give it apparently duties with respect to the Port of London. It has already got duties with respect to the Thames and Lea Conservancies over and above its ordinary work, and yet you now propose to throw upon it this gigantic business of education.

The argument of the Government has always been that London ought to be treated in an exceptional manner. But, so far from maintaining that theory, the very object of this Bill, as stated by the noble Marquess, is to extend the Act of last year, as it applied to the country, to London, and to all intents and purposes the Act of last year is extended by this Bill to London with one exception, that the Borough Councils are to appoint four of the managers of the provided schools and the education authority itself two only of those managers. That seems to me to be a most unfortunate provision, because, after all, who is to be responsible for the work and the policy of education in those provided schools but the education authority? Yet you are going to give the supreme authority power to appoint only one-third of the managers, and you are giving the other two-thirds to the Borough Councils who are not otherwise brought into the scheme of the Government in any way, and are absolutely unfitted to carry out these duties. You are encouraging differences between the head authority and the minor authorities by these provisions. If you were giving the London County Council two-thirds of the managers and the minor authority one-third, I could understand the sense in that, and that is an improvement in the Bill which I hope will be pressed in this House. I, for my part, shall certainly support the Motion of the noble Lord behind me. I do so for three reasons. I take exception to this Bill, first, because it abolishes the London School Board, and incidentally, in doing that, abolishes direct representation of women on the central authority; secondly, because it quarters sectarian schools on the rates without keeping the management in the hands of the public; and, thirdly, because it allows tests to be imposed on teachers in non-provided schools, which is a great hardship to Nonconformists who adopt the teaching profession.

*THE LORD BISHOP OF LONDON: My Lords, you will probably expect me, as Bishop of London, to say a few words to-night upon this Bill. Let me state at once that I do not consider it my *rôle* to defend the action of the Government with regard to the County Council. It may be that they have conceived a greater idea of the powers of the London County Council than they at first had. Nor do I feel in the slightest degree disposed to attack the work of the London School Board, for I have the greatest admiration for that body. We all owe it a great debt of gratitude for the zeal and energy it has displayed, and I think the noble Lord opposite who has moved the rejection of this Bill will admit that some of the best managers have been clergymen of the Church of England. Nor do I mean to raise the question which we fought from the Episcopal Bench in the Bill of last year with regard to the management of the schools. We do not agree with one or two of the provisions with regard to the management of schools, but I do not think it would be statesmanlike to raise that question again on this Bill. I wish to deal to-night only with the morality of the Bill, but before I do so I should like to reply to one or two points raised by Lord Tweedmouth. The noble Lord quoted from the London Diocesan Report and he fell into a natural error. That Report merely gives the accounts of a body which helps the voluntary schools. Each voluntary school stands practically upon its own basis. I had myself in Bethnal Green to spend £8,000 on one school. We shall issue an appeal in a few weeks in London for £30,000 for the repairs of the voluntary schools of the Metropolis. Are we paying nothing towards the voluntary schools when we are undertaking burdens like that? As to the errors by infants which the noble Lord quoted from the Diocesan Report, it surely cannot be considered a serious thing that a few infants made mistakes about Herod. I am sure noble Lords themselves made many mistakes in infancy in regard to Bible history.

I deny emphatically that there was any bargain between the Church and the Government with regard to the Act of last year. What happened was that in our joint meeting of Convocation we formulated certain conditions which we were ready to submit to. I proposed myself that there should be, up to one-third, popular representation on the board of management and carried it by a large majority, but the fact that these things were written down, and that the Government took them into consideration in framing the Bill, cannot be said to constitute a bargain.

Leaving the points raised by the noble Lord I come to the main question, and that is the morality of this Bill. I endeavour to work with all religious bodies in London, and I shall be distressed by any interruption to that happy co-operation. If it could be proved that this was an immoral Bill I should not support it, however much the Church of England might be benefited. But what are the facts? It is said that the Bill violates the conscience of the ratepayer, that it will lead to unfair proselytizing of the children, and that it hands over the schools to the priests. As to the conscience of the ratepayer, the Finance Committee of the London County Council have published figures which show that while the London voluntary schools cost £180,000 a year, the new subvention will amount to £240,000; so that at first there would be a balance of £60,000 without touching the rates. They calculate that as the years go on, and they level up the voluntary schools, the expenditure will be increased. No doubt that will be so as the levelling-up process advances; but that process relates to the secular education in voluntary schools, and therefore the Nonconformist ratepayer can feel content that at no time will a penny of his rates be spent in denominational teaching.

As to the serious charge of proselytising, the record of the Church should be a sufficient answer. But what may possibly be a grievance in the country schools cannot be one in London, where there is no child in any quarter who cannot find a place in an undenominational school if its parents wish it. As to handing over the schools to the priests, we know that that is a platform grievance only. I have been gravely assured that the fiscal policy of the Colonial Secretary is due to the influence of the priests upon him in the hope of a rise in the tithe. When we are told that this Bill hands over the schools to the tyranny of the priests, surely we have only to recall the principle of the Bill. By this Bill the clerical influence in the schools is diminished. There is full representation of the laity; and lest any one should be led away with the idea that domination by the priest is brought in, I must state again that we have, with our eyes open, allowed the clerical influence in our schools to be largely diminished by the Bill. There is no grievance that should be a grievance in a Christian country in the fact that 175,000 children in London will be taught definite religion by those who believe in it.

Is there no grievance on the other side? I urge that the position of those who have provided voluntary schools, given subscriptions for their maintenance, worked for them year after year, ought to be taken into account in dealing with this matter. I deny the truth of the statement that all the voluntary schools are inefficient. I appeal to the reports of the school inspectors, which have shown neither fear nor favour, to prove that the voluntary schools, in spite of their difficulties, have done most excellent work, have received high grants year after year, and have deserved a better requital from the country than either to be ruthlessly extinguished or to be deprived of the possibility of fulfilling the purpose for which they have been founded. I cannot then find any injustice in this Bill. The Government have carried out a difficult piece of work, and have tried to show fair play to Churchmen and Nonconformists. It is because I believe it to be their wish to carry out in a statesmanlike way the policy of saving Church schools while bringing in the element of public control that I heartily support the Second Reading of the Bill.

LORD SANDHURST: My Lords, may I be allowed to interpose for a few minutes in this debate? It has been my good fortune to have served as an elected member of the London School Board, and at this moment I happen to be a member of the London County Council. I do not propose to follow the right rev. Prelate with regard to the religious arguments that he addressed to your Lordships, but what seems to have been lost sight of in the two very able speeches we have listened to from the Episcopal bench is the practical working of the Bill. I must say I agree with my noble friend Lord Reay, who set such store by the details of the Bill. There is a general consensus of opinion expressed, I think by all speakers in this House, and by a great many, if not all, outside, as to the valuable work that has been done by the London School Board. The chorus of approval is so universal and sincere, and the commendation of such a high character, that I must say I have heard no efficiently valid reason, either from the noble Marquess, or from other speakers, why the London School Board should be done away with.

If after thirty years' existence the London School Board had been found to have been guilty of certain shortcomings, would it not have been possible, to use a hackneyed phrase, to have mended the School Board instead of ending it? I turn to the two sets o duties performed by the London School Board and the London County Council, and I ask your indulgence for so doing because my noble friend Lord Reay had, with the great authority of Chairman of the London School Board, dealt with that subject in his speech. But I occupy a different position from the noble Lord because, whilst he has acted with so much distinction as Chairman of the School Board, I, as one of the elected members, have had to do with much of the details which he has enumerated to your Lordships. The work of the London School Board is quite enough to occupy the whole time of those who undertake these duties. As Lord Reay pointed out, there are various committees, and every head and sub-head of administration has to be dealt with by those committees.

But there is another side of the work which is not transacted at the offices on the Thames Embankment. I allude to certain committees which sit in the localities. One is the District Committee, at the meetings of which the members of the district deal with a great many points of detail arising in their district. Then there is what is called Notice B. Committee, which has to do with children's attendances, and so forth. My great fear is, if this Bill is carried and these duties are placed upon the London County Council, that in a great measure these very delicate as well as responsible duties must to a certain extent fall into the hands of the officials of the London County Council. These officials are, no doubt, very conscientious people, but at the same time I do think they ought to be thoroughly supervised by a member of the Board itself.

Perhaps a personal reminiscence of my own in regard to the work of the School Board is worth columns of prepared argument and theory. I remember very well, when I was first returned to the School Board, sitting next to a lady member who was certainly one of the most practical and common-sense people I ever came across, with the most whole-hearted interest in education. She said to me "How much time do you propose to give to this work?" I was quite new to my responsibilities and obligations, and I replied that I hoped to attend the Board meetings and also the meetings of any committees to which I might be appointed. The comment that that reply brought was—"That is no use at all." My friend stated that she was engaged certainly for five days in the week, and very often for six. She then proceeded to explain the nature of the duties, and I have no doubt that in her opinion I have proved a very lame member of the Board. But if the duties of the London School Board are important and onerous, I certainly can say from the year's experience I have had on the London County Council, that the duties of that body are not less important, but are certainly more onerous. Though I have only been one year on the County Council, I have acquired a tolerably good insight into its work. I have been able to estimate the enormous quantity of work which the County Council performs over an almost illimitable field of labour, and also, if I may say so, to very thoroughly appreciate the genuine single-mindedness of its members and the zeal and energy they have displayed.

The London County Council has to do with every conceivable work of administration, and while many people not far from here, despise, or attempt to despise, the London County Council, I believe that it is really growing in the affections of the great masses of the people of London. I am not surprised at that, because they know that their best interests are involved in the pure administration of that body. My noble friend Lord Tweedmouth referred to the immense volume of work that they perform, and I should like to say here that whilst on the one hand, we have heard deprecatory remarks about the London County Council, I have also observed that of late years more work has been put upon their shoulders. Last year fourteen of its members were detailed for work on the London Water Board, and next year, as you have been reminded, the County Council may have to take its share in the government of the Port of London; and if, in addition to that, there is added the work of the London School Board, I venture to say that the burden will be too heavy for it to bear. I am afraid that part of the work of education will fall into the hands of the additional members, so to speak, of the Education Committees, who, though they may be no doubt admirable people, will not be directly representative of the ratepayers.

Mention has been made to-night of the Technical Education Board, to which the County Council supplies twenty members, and universal commendation has been given to its work. I should like to refer for a moment to the recent gift of a college, announced by Lord Rosebery, and to say, as some criticism has been made, how deeply we appreciate this gift and the munificent generosity which prompted it. I greatly regret the abolition of the London School Board as an elected *ad hoc* assembly. The work, of course, will fall on to the shoulders of the London County Council, and I am perfectly certain, severe though that work will be, that that body will take it up with enthusiasm and thoroughness, and with the desire to do their utmost for the education of the people of London. But, while I make that admission, I greatly regret that the London School Board is to cease to exist, and I shall with the greatest sincerity give my vote in favour of the Motion of my noble friend behind me.

*THE LORD BISHOP OF HEREFORD: My Lords, I had indulged the hope that this Bill might not have arrived in this House during the present session, but seeing that we have it before us I feel bound to support the Motion of the noble Lord opposite. As I understand the matter, this Bill is, with a few modifications, simply an application to London of the Act which was passed last year for the rest of the country; and the plea of the noble Lord is that we should not at this moment attempt to apply that Actto the Metropolis. I heartily support that view in the interests of the good education of the Metropolis, because I have a profound conviction that if this matter is deferred till next year the Metropolis will get a far better Education Bill than this one. I support delay in the interests, also, of harmony and peace. I support it, too, on the ground of what I may call rudimentary civic justice. I still hold that the Act of last year contravenes the fundamental principles of rudimentary civic justice and equality, and, having that conviction, I cling to the hope that this application of the Act to London may be deferred. Above all, I may say I hold this view in the interests of the Established Church of England. I had my fears a year ago, and my experience since has tended to confirm those fears, that the passing of that Act would do a real injury to the best interests of the Church of England. On this ground I most earnestly support the Mo ion of the noble Lord. I do so feeling that there is nothing to lose and a great deal to gain by delaying this matter. There is nothing to lose, because the application of this Act will do very little to improve the education of London for some time to come, and there is a great deal to gain, because it will be a great advantage to us if only for the next twelve months we can keep London out of that zone of discord and embitterment which the Act of last year has established all over the country.

Lord Sandhurst.

Another reason is that next year we may hope for a much better Bill. There are indications that we may have a new Parliament before next year, and possibly a new Government. I cannot but feel that the probabilities are highly in favour of that new Parliament producing a far better Bill than this one, and, if we have not a new Government, we may entertain the hope of having the noble Duke who leads this House back in his place, freed from some of those entanglements which I believe have kept him from giving us so good a Bill as he has desired to give. I venture to say that there are a great many of us who have opposed the noble Duke in this matter who would support him heart and soul if he were in a position to give us the kind of Bill which we feel sure, from what we know of his educational record outside Parliament, he would give if he were free to give us of his best. If this Motion is rejected, what is the alternative? The alternative, as I understand it, is that you will embroil the metropolis as you have embroiled the country; that will be the main fruit of the application of last year's Education Act to London.

It is a matter of wonder—I had almost said of amazement—to me that the Government should not have learned any lesson from the experience that has been gained since the Act of last year became law. You have every indication that public opinion is strongly against this type of legislation. The feeling in the country is very acute, and there is a great deal of indignation that these measures should be pressed upon the country by a Government that was elected for an entirely different purpose. Yet in spite of all these undoubted evidences of the rooted objection of the country to some of the fundamental principles in this legislation, the Government have persevered. I cannot but feel that it is a sort of political infatuation that leads them on. Our own Church, as is becoming more and more evident, is by no means in love with the Act of last year. There are scores of clergy who are profoundly dissatisfied with it. I am not going into the grounds of their dissatisfaction, but the fact remains that a great number of clergy and also a great many thoughtful lay Churchmen are profoundly anxious about the effect of that Act. They are uneasy about it, and they begin to see that it is an Act which may possibly lead to issues they had never anticipated. They begin to feel that under the entirely new conditions which have been created by the rate-aid to all voluntary schools, our Church, as regards her educational position, has been left in a condition of unstable equilibrium, or, to put it in the plainer words of the late Archbishop of Canterbury, "the slippery slope" of rate aid.

The clergy are beginning to feel that what has been a temporary gain may prove only the introduction to a state of things which they had never anticipated, and to which they would strongly object. They fear that their leaders have not been as far-seeing as they might have been. We have urged that we ought to maintain the control of our own schools, but we have contended that the schools should be maintained out of the rates. Each of these may be good, but we cannot hope to permanently have them both. It is in direct opposition to all our constitutional traditions that we should have them both, and so we shall lose in the long run. That is why I venture to say that this Act has been a temporary gain of a very dangerous kind. We are beginning to see that we have been blindly grasping at things which are incompatible, as indeed we Bishops and clergy do too often. Just as in Church government we desire to remain established and endowed, and yet to be independent of Parliament and the Lay Courts, or to retain the national character of the Church and yet to narrow the franchise of lay membership, to a communicant or confirmation test, an impossible combination, so in this Education Controversy we have made the same mistake. If we pass from the Anglican Church to the Roman Catholic Church, we hear it said in the House of Commons that Roman Catholics are not satisfied with this Act. They have received, as we have, a very substantial endowment under the Act. I do not complain of their having received it. I think that, by their devoted work on behalf of the children of the very poor, they have deserved any help that can be given them quite as much as any of us. But I am astonished that the Government are going to apply this endowment to the Metropolis, as it is applied to the country, because there can be no doubt at all that this kind of endowment does give a great deal of offence to a great many of the Protestant supporters of the Government.

Turning to another part of the field of our unhappy divisions I observe that the most rev. Primate is sanguine enough to hope that all the difficulties with regard to what is called "passive resistance" will soon be got over, and that things will resume their normal state. I am not so sanguine. I am old enough to remember some of the experiences of the Church Rate agitation, and I see the possibility of this proving a new Church Rate agitation which will win in the end, as the old one did. I am surprised that the Government should have done nothing to avert the passive resistance agitation in London. They might have seen how large is the number of persons with settled convictions on this matter, and whose consciences have been very deeply injured. That leading politicians have not taken part in the movement is no limitation to its importance. It is on the other hand evidence of its genuine strength. Your Lordships do not fully realise the convictions, even the prejudices, of people who live in a different sphere, and I lament the ignorance of the ordinary English Churchman in regard to the religious life and convictions of Nonconformist bodies. Your Lordships know very little of these feelings at first hand, unless you happen to be Scotsmen; they do not come home to Churchmen as they do to the average middle-class Nonconformist. It is rash to take an optimistic view of this agitation. The Government have drifted into a rash policy in putting this Bill before Parliament when they have their eyes open to the effect the Act of last year has produced. On these grounds, among others, I support the Motion of the noble Lord opposite.

As regards the Bill itself I will not go over my objections, which are as strong against this as against the parent Bill. Of refusal of public control for schools publicly maintained I would only say that it is a political axiom that schools so maintained should be controlled by those who maintain them. Moreover, the closing of the door against so many applicants for the post of head teacher will produce the greatest discord and strife, and be an injury to both religion and education. It has not been sufficiently recognised that by the changes of last year's legislation the great body of teachers have virtually become Civil servants of the State, and I shall be surprised if they are content to be barred from the promotion open to other Civil servants. I shall be amazed if the National Union of Teachers do not protest against the exclusion of half their members from so many of the best posts in the service. The Government can hardly realise what forces of discord and bitterness they are letting loose, and I am afraid of the result of these forces in the Metropolis with its vast multitudes of people. I make a last appeal to the Government not to proceed with the Bill. In the destruction of the London School Board they are sweeping away one of the most efficient educational organisations brought into existence in our time, whose splendid work has deeply interested the people. I am quite unable to understand what it was that induced the Government to destroy the School Board. I can find no explanation of their action, except that it is part of what is called an anti-popular movement of the time, an anti-democratic tendency, putting into practice the feeling Mr. Gladstone called—

"Distrust of the people qualified by fear."

It involves also the disfranchisement of women for service where they have been most useful. I am glad to see there is some sign of grace, and even of penitence, in regard to educational endowment, and I take the clause as evidence that the Government admit they were wrong last year. But it is only a half-hearted repentance, and I propose to move an Amendment in Committee to make the repentance thorough and effective. But even now, I appeal to the noble Duke to allow the Motion of the noble Lord opposite to be carried and to put this Bill on the shelf to moulder there innocuous, for I am certain no Government of the future would ever take it down again. The Bill will do a *minimum* amount of educational service, but it will sow an immense amount of discord, antagonism, and bitterness between religious denominations, and do more than anyone can estimate to retard the good work denominations are doing in growing harmony, putting it back for no man knows how many years.

The sitting was suspended at a quarter to Eight o'clock till Nine o'clock.

On the resumption of the House,

* THE EARL OF DONOUGHMORE said my Lords, the question of this Bill before us has already been discussed in a great many aspects by noble Lords who are infinitely better able to discuss it than I, and I do not wish to follow the many questions that have been raised by the right rev. Prelate who spoke last. They are questions that I do not feel justified in entering upon, but which ought more properly to be dealt with by his colleagues on the Episcopal Benches. I wish to deal with one aspect, and one aspect in particular, in connection with this Bill. The noble Lord who moved the rejection of the Bill speaks, of course, with very great authority as Chairman of the London School Board, and as one of his humble followers and servants on that School Board I dislike very much to find myself in opposition to anything he has said—more especially as it will probably be taken out of me when we meet next October if I go too

strongly for my Chairman. At the same time, the noble Lord made an eloquent appeal on behalf of the London School Board and seemed extremely eager that the scheme of this Bill should be dropped and that the whole of education should be handed over in some new scheme to the London School Board as it is now constituted. I rise to point out that the recommendation naturally comes with some weight from him as Chairman of the School Board, but in voicing these opinions he is not voicing the unanimous opinion of the London School Board as at present constituted. The attitude of the London School Board towards that Bill has been a very curious one. Last December they passed a very lengthy and complicated Resolution as to what they considered to be the proper educational government of London for the future. The gist of the whole thing was that they were in favour of an *ad hoc* authority. This year on the 30th April a Motion to petition Parliament against this Bill on behalf of the London School Board was thrown out, and yet three weeks later, on the 21st May they again passed a Resolution in favour of an *ad hoc* authority, though new areas now crept in to those advocated in the former Resolution—and finally, last week a fourth Motion to again petition Parliament against this Bill was withdrawn. Now, my Lords. I do not bring forward this proof of the vacillation of the London School Board in any vindictive spirit, but merely in order to show that the majority of the Board—but only the majority—are frantic at the idea that through the abolition of the Board they will not have the work to perform which they have performed for a great many years, and which presumably they like very much. But it is not natural to expect that their suggestion as to what we ought to do for the future government of London would be very logical or reasonable. No one ever expected the fatted calf to give reasonable suggestions for celebrating the home-coming of the prodigal son, and for the same reason the London School Board cannot be expected to give reasonable suggestions for a Government which is to supersede them. But here the simile stops. The minority, which is only six or seven less on this subject than the majority, welcomes this Bill. We welcome it because really we believe it will tend to the better organisation of educational effort in London. At the present time education is in too many hands. I do not wish to recapitulate the numerous authorities which now have to deal with it, but at present we have too many cooks and the broth is getting spoilt.

I welcomed last year's Bill because I believed that by it the state of affairs of too many authorities would be remedied in the country, and I welcome this Bill because I think it will apply the same amelioration to the lot of London. My Lords, unless some such re-organisation is carried out it is impossible to expect us to compete properly with the highly organised systems in vogue on the Continent, that furnish us with competitors in every walk of life. I do not wish to minimise the work done by the London School Board. There are proofs that since the Act of 1870 was passed, when the educational system was in a state of chaos, a great deal has been done for the amelioration of that system. That is due to two influences, the direct and the indirect influence of the London School Board. It is admitted on every side, however, that the School Board has two vital defects, and these, in the interests of the education of London, must be eradicted, and they can only be so eradicted by the abolition of the Board. The first great defect is that it has undoubtedly lost its hold on popular interest. This is the point to which the noble Lord the Lord Reay referred in moving the rejection of the Bill—and I do not fancy the noble Lord thinks it matters—that only 18 per cent. of the voters went to the poll at the last election. Now, my Lords, I think it a very great pity that the public do not take more interest in the people who are managing their education for them. But more than that, I have heard it solemnly asserted that although only 18 per cent. of the electors went to the poll that was no worse than any other election that takes place in the country. That is only one type of the arguments advanced by the opponents to the Bill. It is absolutely contrary to the facts, as at the last election for the Borough and County Councils, and for the House of

Commons, in London there were vastly heavier polls than 18 per cent. of the electorate. I have the figures here, and they show that these other bodies have undoubtedly far greater interest in the eyes of the public than has the London School Board. It is a great pity, but it is so. The second defect, that is the reason for my troubling your Lordships to-night, is that undoubtedly the work of the Board is vastly over-centralised. In this, my Lords, I cannot conceal from myself lies the great danger to the new body that is to deal with the future education in London. The Lord Reay stated the fact that a great deal of the work of the London School Board is now delegated. It is delegated to a dozen committees which sit at the offices on the Victoria Embankment. But that is not nearly enough. The delegation ought to be to bodies sitting in the localities in which the schools actually are.

At present the educational machine in London, so far as the London School Board is concerned, is clogged by the fact that nothing, absolutely nothing, can be done by any official of the Board without a reference to Victoria Embankment, the headquarters of the Board. And, my Lords, if I may trespass on your patience a few minutes, I would ask to bring before your notice some extracts that I have made from the records of some of the committees sitting at the Victoria Embankment offices which will prove my point. The first case was brought to my notice by Mr. Thompson, the Leader of the Conservative Party of the London School Board. It happened in the Victoria School, Becklow Road, Hammersmith. Noble Lords will remember that the weather of the last spring was very bad; we had a great deal of rain, and we had a great deal of fog. The head teacher of one of the departments in the school went into her room one morning to start her class, but was promptly driven out by the smoke from the chimney. She took the children into another room and sent for the local chimney-sweep to sweep the chimney. That was done. Two hours afterwards the school resumed its duties, and the sweep received one shilling for his work. In due time the demand of the teacher for repayment was made to the clerk of the works, and a most lengthy correspondence ensued. In the first place, my Lords, it was pointed out that the chimneys had been swept only three months before, and the Board could not therefore sanction the expenditure. The correspondence started from the clerk of the works to the schoolkeeper it went from the schoolkeeper to the head teacher, from the head teacher to the managers, and from the managers back to the clerk of the works. The result was that a *dossier* of correspondence was collected, and it was eventually decided that some expenditure must be admitted in view of this being a special case, but that as the Board's contract price for chimney-sweeping was only sixpence, that amount only could be allowed; the other sixpence must come out of the pocket of the head teacher. The Board in that way saved sixpence to the ratepayers, but only after three or four shillings had been spent in postage stamps in the process. My Lords, I have a number of other cases which I will mention quickly in order to show that this is not an isolated case. To show how detail is dragged out until one is heartily sick of the whole thing; here is a case of a school in the Tower Hamlets. Five months and a half have elapsed since the application was originally made by the teacher of the infants' department to spend a small sum on painting dots and lines on the floor in order to teach the babies to walk straight. Leave to do that has not yet been given. In a school in Southwark it took two months for a head teacher to obtain leave to hang certain pictures on the wall. For no picture can be hung on the walls of a school without reference to the Victoria Embankment. In Fulham three months elapsed before the head teacher could get a cupboard in which to store the needlework of her pupils. In a school at Hackney four and a half months were necessary to have a room altered into an art room, although the alteration merely consisted of providing a couple of blinds and a centre gas light. Again, in the Tower Hamlets three months went by before the head teacher could get six small ink-well trays for putting water in with which the pupils could wet their painting brushes; and at Hackney four months elapsed before a teacher could be given an extra cupboard. Lastly, I have a case that came before the School Management Committee, in which it took seven and a half months to decide of what material the infant truants in the Upton House Truant School should have their nightshirts made. All these later cases, except one, were cases in which delay was not caused by argument or discussion. They were all routine applications, which were granted as a matter of course as soon as the proper authority heard of them. Your Lordships may ask who was responsible for these delays. I am not making any accusation against any of the officials. I think we have on the London School Board a set of officials of whom any public body might be proud. We have a splendid staff, but the fact is, that the machine is clogged by all this ridiculous detail.

There is a perfect remedy that can be applied by the new authority, and it is that these petty details must be attended to by the managers of the schools, and the central body must have nothing whatever to do with them. I sincerely hope this is what will happen under the new Bill. My Lords, I may suggest one or two points that could be delegated to the managers. There are, for instance, the minor affairs of management; miscellaneous expenses, subject perhaps to a limit of £10 a year for each school, chimney sweeping, sanitary repairs, plumbing, and carpentering work, and drainage repairs. Secondly, the details of enforcing attendance at school might be left to the local authorities, who could deal with the parents direct. The central authority could surely trust the managers to look after this matter themselves. Then again, the appointments to be made in the lower grades, or at any rate the sifting of the applications for those appointments, could be well left to the managers. There are many other alterations which would go to making up a working system. If these petty details are not delegated and the London County Council try to control the whole machine, which is now clogged by the work in connection with 500 schools, how much more will that machine be clogged when 200 voluntary schools are added and higher education has also to be dealt with. I hope the London County Council will see the necessity of this course, and that the Board of Education will use all their influence in urging the London County Council to carry out requirements in this direction. My Lords, one cannot disguise the fact that at present the County Council and the Borough Councils do not love each other very much, and that whereas the Borough Councils are to appoint the majority of the members on the committees of management, it will follow that the County Councils will be shy of giving them any power at all. If, however, the Board of Education is the friend of both parties, some satisfactory arrangement can doubtless be arrived at. I suggest to simply let the new authority lay down the lines of management and leave the managers to carry out the details. If that is not done the new system will become as clogged as the present one, and the education of the children must necessarily suffer. My Lords, it is because I believe that this Bill does offer an opportunity for organising education of all grades on a sounder and more business-like basis that I intend to vote for the Second Reading, and I hope that a majority of your Lordships will do the same.

LORD KINNAIRD: My Lords, no doubt you have been interested in hearing the details which the noble Earl has referred to, and I hope the body to which these duties are to be entrusted will profit by them. We have always heard that that body has plenty of work to do, and I think we can find similar stories connected with other Departments of the Government. If there is one Board in London that is fully worked, and fully employed, I think it will be admitted on both sides of the House that it is the London County Council. If that body is to have added to its labours all these matters, it will not tend to the efficiency of education. We are willing that certain details should be altered with a view to making the London School Board more efficient, but not to do away with an educational authority which in past years has done so much to further education in London. I believe that with some modifications and additions and some evolutions of the present Board it might make an efficient authority for carrying on the work of education in this great city. I admit fully with the Archbishop of Canterbury that there is a difficulty in discussing this matter for London, because this is not an Education Bill for London. It is a short Act to modify certain details in last year's Act, and we should not be in order in discussing the main Bill. And certainly at the fag end of the session, it would not be consulting the convenience of your Lordships if we were to consider this matter fully, and, apparently, we merely have to confirm what has been settled in another House. With reference to the main question, I fully agree with the Archbishop that it does not apply to London in the same way as it applies to the rest of the country, but there are certain matters which hitherto London has been free to work out in its own way without being trammelled with the further details that will be put upon it under this Bill. It seems to me that these questions within the walls of this House are not so urgent as they are outside them. There is that question which no one can deny has been carried on here in a spirit in which, if it had only been carried on all through the time in which it has been before the country, a good deal of evil and ill feeling which has been raised, and will be raised, could have been avoided. This question, whether we like it or not, will not be settled in the quiet atmosphere of this House, but will be discussed throughout the length and breadth of this country, and London will join in that discussion.

There are certain main questions which some of us believe in, and we cannot support the Government in this Bill, because we think that an injustice will be perpetrated. For instance, there is the question—which always appeared to me to be a main question—of the higher appointments of teachers. Speaking as a Scotchman, and belonging to a country where we are enabled, by having proper training colleges to train teachers to hold their own, I admit that where there is fair competition, they can obtain higher appointments without leaving the Church of their fathers. That is no small matter for many parents and many of those who hold sincere opinions and religious views. Everyone on the Benches opposite will agree that they would not like to do anything which would interfere with the conscientious convictions of those with whom they differ on the point of Church government, but with whom they agree in a desire to work in everything tending to the better amelioration of our country and in settling social problems. There are some possible difficulties ahead with reference to those who, not holding, perhaps, religious opinions as strongly as their fathers and mothers held them, see all chances of promotion, when coming south of the Tweed, shut out, unless they join the Established Church of the country. Therefore, while I do not think, by any means, that all will do so, there are plenty of instances of those in whom the sense of competition and ambition have been too strong, and they have either given up their faith altogether or else taken the new one with a view to getting further appointments. Assuming that these still hold to their own religious convictions the position is that one half of the good teachers, so far as England is concerned, and especially in the rural districts of the south of England, although they are as well trained as any others and can hold their own in any competition, will be shut out of all the higher appointments. That was one of the strongest blots on the Bill of last year.

Then we have the question of the payment of rates. I am not going at length into that, my Lords, while many of us feel that it is a very serious position to take up to refuse to pay a properly assessed rate. I speak on behalf of those who feel very strongly, and whose consciences, perhaps, have become too sensitive on this matter. No one can pretend that a large class of men, who have hitherto shown that they have been able to hold their own in all controversy that has taken place, have not done good work. These men are now face to face with what they believe to be a conscientious objection, and if your Lordships believe that the controversy will be ended by the passing of this Bill I can assure your Lordships that there are many who have shown in the past that they have convictions to which they strongly hold, and if necessary they are ready to suffer for them. Not only are Nonconformists to be found among this body of men. The Archbishop will agree that if it had not been for certain excessive opinions manifested by certain members of the

Church of England, and if they had all held moderate views, there would not have arisen the outcry on this question that we are afraid of handing over powers to those who hold different views to what we believe to be the histori views of our Church. I believe these excessive opinions do a great deal of harm to the Church. A week ago I went into a certain district and at the parish church there was a collection for the school with a view to clearing off a debt upon it before this new law comes into force. The vicar is a very high churchman, holding views that not many of your Lordships would hold. He appealed to the congregation—and he made a mistake so far as his visitors were concerned – to give larger contributions to that particular collection in order that they might bring under the Church teaching and baptismal teaching all the children in the parish. He appealed for the larger collection in order that another school should not be opened there and that they might have all the children of Nonconformists brought within the pale of the Church. Such extreme views add a great deal to the difficulty that already exists because the moment they get an opportunity those who disapprove of these views raise a discussion on a matter that ought to be above suspicion. That is going on all over the country, and we are handing over to such religious teachers several thousand—no matter whether it is 4,000 or 8,000—children of those who have conscientious objections to putting their children under such a state of bondage.

With reference to the elections. My Lords, there was a prophecy last year that there would be honest representation of different views. I fully admit that the honourable understanding has been carried out, but, unfortunately, we are a people having strong religious convictions, that sometimes override good judgment and understanding. Possibly your Lordships do not follow the facts and figures of what is taking place. In the south of England there was a solid Board elected who are of one way of thinking and that does not add to the possibilities of union and harmony. I do not believe this will lead either to harmony or to the best kind of religious instruction in the future; and as I am sure there may be a reaction, and that some may object rather than have a false view of what religious life may be, and besides there may be opposition as to the proper religious instruction for our children, I shall have to vote in favour of the Chairman of the London School Board's Resolution.

*THE LORD **BISHOP OF ROCHESTER**: My Lords, this debate has taken a rather wide range. The first clause reminds me of the casket in the Arabian Nights, which, although it was very small in dimensions, from it when opened emerged a figure which rose to gigantic dimensions. The clause contains the whole controversy about the Act of 1902. I do not propose to follow the noble Lord into some of his further excursions in this matter. He appealed to Scotch experience. Possibly if he did not bring to the interpretation of English affairs quite so much of his Scotch experience he would look at them rather more hopefully, though, indeed, even from that experience he might draw a good deal to modify some of the things which he had said on this matter. But the real inconvenience of this debate is that it really breaks into two parts which are quite distinct from another. We had a contributive speech from the noble Lord on my right, Lord Donoughmore, who dealt with the interesting question of administration, and I hope we shall hear a good deal of that subject in Committee. But he was followed by the noble Lord opposite, who took us away into the Act of 1902. I think that the first person to do that to-night was the most reverend Primate. A great deal has been said, and in particular the issue of justice has been raised. We were even told by the right reverend Prelate (Hereford) that elementary civic justice was being violated. The right reverend Prelate does us a service by showing that matters can be looked at from different points of view by those who sit on these (Episcopal) benches. I cannot help regretting that he does not more extensively apply his power of seeing things from other people's point of view to mediate between some of us and our opponents. I think he might do something more useful than to take up the points made by those to whom the majority of us in this matter are somewhat opposed, and to emphasise and underline those points. I think it is not untrue to say that the impression is being widely given that there is justice on one side, and on the other what has been called denominational selfishness or greed. I need not say that is misrepresentation of the very gravest kind. The right rev. Prelate (London) said that if he thought that he should vote against this Bill. So should we all hope. But I cannot help thinking that this extension of the Act of 1902 to London does throw considerable light on this matter of justice. I suppose we are all, in dealing with a public question, somewhat influenced by our circumstances.

My Lords, I will not deny that in dealing with this matter I was influenced by the fact that I came to close quarters with the question of elementary education whilst acting as Vicar of Leeds. The town was divided between two powerful bodies of citizens. One of those bodies was what we should call the undenominational party, nearly all of them, perhaps, being Nonconformists, and very hearty supporters in all respects of the School Board system. The other body of citizens which, to judge by the evidence given by the alternating School Board elections, were nearly as powerful, were as strongly devoted to the cause of denominational education. This being so, the existing system appeared to me to be fundamentally unfair and unjust, inasmuch as members of the latter party were obliged to contribute to the School Board system, whilst they could not maintain their own schools except under a heavy handicap, and, therefore, the class of schools which represented their convictions was getting poorer and less efficient (although I think it is perfectly true to say, as the right rev. Prelate said, in many respects the voluntary schools have had as good a record of efficiency as the Board schools). Well, it appeared to me that if the State were to say, "We will take these two bodies of citizens and treat them equally and will allow all public funds to be dealt with, as the taxes and grants are at present, impartially, so that each body shall have their share," there would have been a perfectly just rivalry under such conditions. Every parent would have had the choice as to what class of school to send his child, and every child could have been educated in the class of school of which his parent approved Now it appeared to me that was a more just system than the one under which we were living. When, however, you deal with the whole question, you come into contact with the class of schools which are generally described as those of the single school area, and a very great deal has been made of that. The most rev. Primate acknowledged, and I acknowledge, that there is a good deal to be said for the Nonconformist case in such areas. I have said it in public before, and I am glad to say it again in public in this House. We were ready to attempt to meet that grievance so far as was compatible with not going to the other extreme, and not destroying the schools which with so much labour, so much expense, and so much patience had been built up by the Church. We made such promises as we believed would certainly meet the grievance of the Nonconformists in such schools, or would at any rate make them much less than before.

The Lord Bishop of Rochester.

But now in the case of London it does appear to me that this question of justice does not enter in. I observe that this is partly admitted. The London Nonconformist says—"I must hold by my brother in the country, although it does not touch me." The noble Lord opposite (Tweedmouth) says that it does touch Nonconformists in a few cases. But, I think, broadly speaking, that my brother of London will agree with me in saying if you go over the face of the town while there are many areas where the Church child cannot find its own school, there are very few areas where, if a Board school is preferred, it is not to be found. We may very fairly say this is not a London grievance. Then, my Lords, how does this question of justice come in? I think it comes in upon grounds of what I may call a much more abstract kind. It comes in because it is laid down that it is unfair for the State to support the teaching of any denomination to which, of course, a number of its citizens do not belong. I never have understood what was the foundation of that axiom, but I shrewdly suspect that it would break down in practice. Noble Lords who have opposed the Bill to-night have made no answer as to the practical provision of Jewish teaching under the School Board system in London. Again the principle does not hold good in Scotland, and although the Episcopalians in Scotland are not a very large body, and I do not know how much sympathy the noble Lord (Kinnaird) gives to them. They might with some reason complain that this principle is not invoked to protect them from receiving denominational teaching in the common schools. But I have never understood why if the State has to deal with A, B, and C, each letter we will take as representing a large body of citizens, why it can only attempt to satisfy them, either by excluding all their teaching alike by not allowing what any of them want—in fact by a secular system, or by only supplying something which is representative of none of them—that is, by undenominational religion. I have never understood why it should not be open to the State to take the third alternative, and to say that what is really fair is to find room within our borders for all that they severally require. Let us suppose, for argument's sake, that A, B, and C are exhaustive of the population and are about of equal value, all three of them. Why then, in such a case—of course an ideal case—why should the State not say: "A, B, and C shall all enter into and contribute to a system in which they all find there is room for them." We insist that it is not denominational greed or denominational selfishness, but it is our idea of what is fairest and most just that makes us contend that if this great divided country,—much more divided than that to which the noble Lord belongs,—is to bring into really effective use that principle upon which the great majority of us say we agree—viz., the basing of education on religion, it must do so, not by trying to squeeze us all into a system that does not represent any of us, but by trying really to satisfy us all. I do not believe that the system to which I have referred would stand were it not that one of the great bodies of citizens in the State is for this purpose content and satisfied with the amalgamated or residual system of education, and therefore does get what it wants, while the rest of us do not.

But if this question of justice is to be really discussed I would ask what is your constructive system? What is your alternative? We know what your alternative was before 1902, what it is to-night, and what it will be if you come into power again. It is so to act as to deprive the Church and other denominations of the results of the great efforts they have made and to practically extinguish the denominational schools. Do you call that just? I do not. It would be an act of great injustice, and yet I see no suggestion of any other and more satisfactory system. I read to-day in *The Times* newspaper a long letter by a deeply respected leader of nonconformity and a personal friend of my own, I mean Dr. Horton. The tone of that letter is delightful when contrasted with the kind of language that has been used by others in the controversy, and which has certainly been mainly used by the opponents of the Act. Dr. Horton suggests that we should trust the people. Well, if we can be sure that the people are willing to look at our principles and to deal with us fairly I suppose we would trust the people, but whilst these undenominational axioms are allowed to dominate I do not see how we can be fairly asked to trust the people. He says the municipal bodies of the County Council would invariably, or with few exceptions which could be redressed, appoint managers who would be in harmony with the schools—would appoint Churchmen for Church schools, and Roman Catholics for Roman Catholic schools. I suppose *à fortiori* if you appoint congenial managers you would also appoint congenial teachers. But then what becomes of the arguments about tests? I do regret that the noble Lord opposite allowed himself, as others have done, to use language which implies that persons coming from North of the Tweed cannot attain great and high educational positions in England without abandoning the faith of their fathers. If he will walk round London and see the splendid palaces which have been distributed all over the Metropolis by the School Board, and remember that every teaching post in each of them is open to every denomination, I think he will alter his opinion.

LORD KINNAIRD: I think I excluded London.

*THE LORD BISHOP OF ROCHESTER: But it is the same thing in all our great towns and wherever the School Board system prevails. There is an open door, or rather an open ladder, for advancement of all kinds. And Dr. Horton admits that there would be upon a fair system a corresponding kind of teacher appointed to a Church school. Then let me take just one other case. I have here a very candid article written in a Church periodical by a Nonconformist. That is a thing of good example, and there is nothing better than in that frank way to exchange opinions. The Nonconformist in this article says hard things of what we have done. He says that the difficulty might have all been solved by allowing the teaching of different denominations within the school. But just read the language used about making little bigots and introducing sectarianism among children, and you will see how little this solution would really be accepted. I remember perfectly well how, some time before the Education Bill of last year was passed, some Nonconformist friends, touching on this point of giving facilities for denominational teaching in the Board Schools, said, "Do not introduce that, we have quarrelling enough already, and if you introduce that, the result will be dreadful." I want then to say that we, at least, are striving for what we believe to be a just and fair-minded system. Where that system presses hardly upon our opponents we would do everything in our power to ease the friction, but to say that because it does in some places not so press it is therefore intrinsically a bad system is to use an argument which might be used in condemnation of any system whatever.

I have already detained your Lordships too long, but I should like to touch upon one other point of a totally different character. I should like to say how very much I hope that in some respects we shall have a centralised machinery — a machinery even more centralised than the Bill in its present form affords. I fully understand the fear expressed by the noble Earl (Donoghmore) on my right. I know there is a great deal to be said against centralisation on points of detail, but there are matters in regard to which I think it is of the greatest importance to the welfare of London education that there should be a strong and more or less independent central body. As a South Londoner I take a deep interest in the welfare of the London boroughs; I lose no opportunity of throwing in my lot with them, and co-operating in every way with their chief magistrates and Councils. But I do not think that respect of the Borough authorities should hold us back from acknowledging that there are functions for which the Councils of the poorer Boroughs are not very highly qualified. One of the characteristics of London life is that from large areas there are withdrawn many of the social elements which go to make up a rich and full life, and people all of one sort and class are left behind. Another point, which follows from it, is that in the Borough Council areas the teachers are a great power—probably a greater power than would be useful in connection with a body which had to deal largely with education. The Government, on second thoughts, have decided to throw the general power into the hands of the County Council rather than those of the Borough Councils. Why have they not gone one step further? Why, in the arrangement of the management system, have they not given the preponderant power to the central authority? That the Borough Councils should be represented is, I grant, a most natural concession to their wishes, and a mark of respect to their value and dignity, but surely you would avoid great possibilities of friction, and also secure greater consistency of administration, if the central board had a preponderating power.

My last words shall be these. I am very desirous that we should avoid the danger of the poorer areas being less well provided for, or providing for themselves less well, in the matter of teaching, than the well-to-do areas. That is a matter upon which I am sure all your Lordships will be of one mind. The noble Lord the Chairman of the School Board will correct me if I am wrong, but I believe that the School Board has for some time past found it necessary to be very careful, by the use of the central power to, resist what seems to be the inevitable tendency for the pick of the teachers to choose the pick of the places. What we want is that the poorest places should have just as good teachers as the richest or best places, and the less attractive places as good teachers as the more attractive. You run a serious danger of not securing that end if the central control in the least degree loses its grip. I do not know how far the machinery in the Bill in that respect could be improved, but I think it would be a step towards it if you inverted the proportions of the management. I do not know whether or not more could be done in the Bill, but it is a serious element in the administration which is to follow the Bill, and I think while we are divided one from another by many controversial considerations on other points, a matter on which we might all be agreed is that of securing the best education for the poorer schools.

LORD COLERIDGE: I am afraid that any opposition to this Bill, particularly at this stage, is likely to fall upon somewhat unheeding ears. The debate which began upon certain lines has been diverted by the most reverend Primate, and has been continued since then mainly on the religious controversy. I am not going to enter upon that controversy; I wish to draw the debate back to the question of whether or not education in London will be improved by this Bill. The Bill when introduced in another place was brought forward for two definite purposes. This Bill was said to be introduced, first, to make a central education authority for the Metropolis, and, secondly, to municipalise education. Those were the two distinct and definite objects of the Bill, and no one on either side of the House will deny that they are most admirable objects if they can be attained. How does the Bill propose to attain those two objects? Take first the central education authority. You have in existence, before your eyes, the London School Board. You have there a central body elected for the purpose, composed of men and women who are devoted and have given up their lives to the very object for which that authority was established. You have, in fact, on the London School Board a body of the very class of people whom you wish to place upon the Education Committees, namely, a body of educational experts. That body is to be destroyed. We are therefore faced with the curious fact that a Bill introduced with the object of creating a central authority for education in London begins by destroying the only central education authority that exists. No one on either side of this House suggests that the abolition of the London School Board is due to any want of alacrity or perseverance or success in the work which it has undertaken. In fact, one of the singular characteristics of this debate is that the highest testimonial to the work of the London School Board has come from those who are now proposing to destroy it. Why destroy it? Why should you not have made of the London School Board the nucleus of the central education authority which you desire to set up?

The reason given by the Vice-President of the Council, when he introduced the Bill in the other House, was that direct popular *ad hoc* election, the giving to the body of a blank cheque upon the ratepayers, would inevitably make it, and had made it, extravagant. Why? The Vice-President of the Council argued from analogy that if the Board of Education were cut absolutely adrift from the financial arrangements of the country, and were freed from Parliamentary and Treasury control, even they would become extravagant. I daresay they would, but the reason why they would be tempted to extravagance is that they would not be popularly elected. The present central education authority in London depends for its mandate upon the ratepayers who have to pay. Surely, then, the ratepayers have the control of the expenditure in their own hands, and you cannot ascribe to the central body that extravagance which is due, if to anybody, to the persons who elected them. It is said, "Oh, that may be very well in theory, but look at the School Board elections. As a matter of fact, only about one-fourth of the ratepayers take the trouble to record their votes. Therefore the Board is not in any sense truly representative of the ratepayers at large." I deplore, as everybody must deplore, the lack of interest displayed in educational contests as evinced by the small percentage of persons who go to the poll; but the very smallness of the number who go to the poll shows, at any rate, that the ratepayers have a complacency under the rates which indicates that no clear case can be made against the London School Board on the ground of extravagance. It is idle to suppose that with this vast body of unpolled ratepayers, if there was any real grievance, or if it could be satisfactorily proved that the Board were extravagant, the ratepayers would not at once flock to the poll and elect a Board more in accordance with their parsimonious ideas. The argument used against direct election used in the other House—I do not think it has been used in this House—was this: It was said—"Oh, direct election is admirable in theory, but the elections are swayed from time to time by some passing religious controversy, and all these passing religious controversies which occupy and sway the minds of the electorate at the time of an election are detrimental to the cause of education." What are you now proceeding to do? You are proceeding to put education in the hands of the London County Council. These passing religious controversies which have been described will not be abolished in consequence; all that will happen is that the religious controversies which are so much deplored will enter into the contests of the London County Council, and you will find that if such religious controversies are detrimental to the cause of education they are still more alien from and detrimental to, the cause of local government in London. These passing religious controversies may be more or less germane to the question of education, but they can have nothing in common with the general work of the London County Council. Therefore, on behalf of the London County Council, I deplore the possibility of these religious controversies entering into their electioneering strife.

Now, my Lords, while you are destroying the School Board, which I think is the only body which can possibly grapple with the vast system of education in London, you are also crippling the London County Council by over-work. The London County Council, as every noble Lord who has been a member of it knows, is already glutted with work. Last year, it has been stated, there were 1,313 meetings of the committees. You have diverted from that body fourteen of its members to serve upon the Water Board, six are to go to the Thames Conservancy, three to the Lea Conservancy, and there is now a prospect of eight or nine being appointed to sit on the Port of London Board. All these persons are diverted from the work of governing London, and if in addition you add to the duties of the County Council the whole working of London education, involving the instruction of 1,000,000 children, and the expenditure of £3,000,000 or £4,000,000 a year, I submit that you will destroy the general work of the London County Council by loading that body with these extra tasks which it is beyond their power to perform. This proposal, too, is a peculiar comment on the accusation which has been brought against the London County Council of striving, in their ambition, to grapple with more tasks than they can readily perform. What will be the result of this? The result will be that the members of the County Council on the Education Committee, who will be the only persons with any direct representative quality in them, must necessarily largely leave the work of education to the co-optive and non-representative members.

If that is so, let me draw your Lordships' attention to the second ground upon which this Bill was put forward, namely, the municipalisation of education. If what I have described be the result of the system which you are introducing, away to the winds goes any idea of municipalising education, because the persons who will practically control education will have no representative municipal quality about them at all, and you will discourage any interest on the part of the ratepayers in education. The ratepayers have their present interest because they feel that they have some direct control, but once let them believe that education is in the hands of persons whom they do not elect, and over whom they have no control, and they will very soon cease to have that interest in education, as education, which it is so desirable they should have. It is said that the religious difficulty will not apply in London. Why not? It is true that in London the proportion of sectarian or voluntary schools to Board schools is less than in other districts. But the opposition—be it wise or foolish, well or ill founded—to the payment of rates for sectarian education, is founded, not upon the amount of the rate, but upon the principle, and that principle will govern the action of Nonconformists in the Metropolis equally with the action of those in the country. It is idle to mock at or to underrate this movement. It is a growing movement, and, being founded on a principle, it will last as long as that principle upon which it is founded is assailed. It has already been sufficiently damaging, I should have thought, to the Church of England. It will do more damage in the Metropolis, because where men are crowded together and there is much intercourse between man and man, a spreading movement has far greater effect than in the more scattered places; and I venture to prophesy that those persons do not accurately forecast the future who say that because voluntary schools in London are in a smaller proportion to the Board schools than in the country, the same course of action will not be pursued. These reasons are sufficient to induce me to vote against the Second Reading of this Bill. I only wish that the *ad hoc* principle, which I believe to be the saving principle in the education of the country, had been more strictly adhered to in the provisions of the Bill.

*EARL SPENCER: My Lords, I do not like to follow one who has spoken so eloquently from the same point of view as that which I hold on this subject, but I feel that I must say something on this important matter. I attach enormous importance to the principles involved in this London Education Bill. Before I come to the policy adopted in the Bill, there is a point which has not yet been referred to, to which I wish to direct your Lordships' attention—viz., the form in which the Bill is presented to your Lordships. It is a Bill framed according to the principle of reference. I have alway opposed that principle. It is exceedingly inconvenient; it must lead to great misunderstanding; it sometimes results in grave misinterpretations. What is this mode of dealing with a Bill? In this case the subject is one of the greatest that could be presented to the Houses of Parliament for legislation, viz., the regulation of education in the Metropolis of the Empire, and the subject is dealt with in a form which it is most difficult for many people to understand. I do not say that this is a Bill which only lawyers can interpret; there are others who are conversant with methods of drafting and statutes; but I venture to say that there are very few who understand how a Bill of this sort really stands. Suppose an intelligent citizen, after this Bill has become an Act of Parliament, desires to know what is the law regulating education in the Metropolis, what has he to do? He refers to the measure we are now discussing, but finds it absolutely impossible to interpret it without referring also to the Act of last year. He then goes to the Act of last year, but that again cannot be interpreted unless he has at hand the Act of 1870, in order to see which clauses are retained and which are repealed. I venture to protest against this form of legislation. It may be perfectly permissible in a matter of small importance, but I say that it is almost a scandal that we should have framed on such a principle a Bill dealing with the great matter of the regulation of education in the Metropolis. The noble Duke, I think on the first evening of the session, rather demurred to some remarks of mine as to the duty of the Opposition to maintain the principles which we advocated last year; he said it was unnecessary, and I am not sure that he did not say it would be a waste of time, to discuss those principles again this year. I ventured then to differ from the noble Duke, and I still maintain the opinion I then held. It is our duty to uphold principles which we believe to be for the good of the country, and if the contravention of those principles, against which we protested last year, is repeated in a Bill of the present session, it is our duty to repeat the objections we then made, and not to allow the matter to be considered as settled by an Act which only by implication refers to the question now before us.

I was very glad that the most reverend Prelate, in his admirable and moderate speech, referred to this matter and said that the real questions which had to be discussed were those very questions which were raised last year. I share with him that feeling. I am not going to repeat at length the arguments of last year, but I must venture to repeat the principal objections which we held to that measure, and which we now hold to the present Bill, inasmuch as it is merely an application of the Act of last year to London. Put broadly, we considered the Bill of last year to be opposed to the principles of popular government and religious equality. We feel it necessary to re-state those objections, even though the principles of the Act of last year are incorporated in a single clause of the present Bill. We say that it is not just that the management of the voluntary schools should be left in the hands of a body on which the education authority, representing the ratepayers, is in a minority, and that the management of denominational schools should be left practically in the hands of those who really represent the former denominational managers. We object to it also because these schools are to be maintained by Parliamentarygrants and local rates. It is often said, "Why did you not object to the grants which were made in former days before the aid of the rates was applied to the denominational schools?" I have always said that I regretted that those grants should be made without local representative control. I know it is said that when you give aid by Parliamentary grant there is the superintendence of Parliament, but I maintain that Parliament cannot sufficiently exercise that control, and that when you have these large grants to local bodies of managers for schools of a denominational character you ought to have, just as much as in the case of rate-aid, the control of local representation. Those were the two main grounds on which we objected to the Bill of last year; presently I will come to a third.

It has been said that the opposition to that measure was not sincere or real. We have had to-night from many sources evidence that that statement is not correct. We had a most impressive statement from the right rev. Prelate the Bishop of Hereford as to the feeling of Nonconformists in the country, and he alluded to the passive resistance movement which has taken so strong a hold of the people. Like others who have spoken, I have taken no part in that movement. I should not myself have advocated it, nor should I have felt it necessary to resist the payment of rates. At the same time, what comes out very strongly in this movement is the earnestness with which a large body of law-abiding men have taken up this matter. That is a point which cannot be overlooked. Whatever may be thought of "passive resistance," whether it be thought right or wrong, it must be admitted that there is a conscientious conviction in the minds of those who have taken up that attitude. The movement has but just commenced. The payment of rates for the new system has only just come into operation, and from what I hear I greatly fear that the movement will spread over the country. This passive resistance movement has been brought about by the extremely strong feeling which prevails throughout the country against the principles of the measure of last year, and I wish the Government had taken notice of that fact, and avoided the extension of the movement to this great Metropolis. It will be a far more difficult and dangerous agitation to cope with if it comes to a large city like this. I deeply regret that the Government, knowing how the Act of last year was regarded by a large body of law-abiding and conscientious men, should not have held their hand, at any rate for this session, and abstained from running the risk of the same agitation being raised here.

Then there is the question of tests. We feel very strongly on that matter. Although we quite admit, with the right rev. Prelate, that in London the difficulty of Nonconformist youths, boys and girls, who have a turn for education, is not so great as in the country, yet it cannot be said that the difficulty of tests is excluded from this Bill. It has been admitted by the right rev. Prelate to-night that you have a right to do away with tests in the Civil Service of the country, That is a great admission. But he also said it was absurd to press that home when it became a question of religious teaching. That is the point. We maintain that to have dogmatic religious teaching paid for out of public money, as it will be under the Act of last year and under this Bill, is unjust. I should like to say a word in reference to the remarks of the most rev. Prelate on this subject. He referred to the position of Churchmen who had paid the rate. I quite admit that there is something in that argument, but I will put the case in this way. What we contend is that out of public funds we pay for the secular education of the country, and we are glad—I for one am not against, but all for religious education in the schools—that, added to secular education, there should be religious education which can be taught without dogma. We say that everybody is interested in that, and that therefore we are doing no injustice in asking every man in the country to pay a rate for the general education of the country. But if this is not sufficient for certain classes of the community, they must pay the additional sum themselves. The most rev. Prelate referred to the large sums which had been paid during the last thirty years by persons belonging to the Church of England towards the denominational schools of the Church. I think he said that since 1870 something like £2,000,000 had been so paid.

THE LORD ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY: In London alone.

*EARL SPENCER: Yes in London. I admit that that is a large sum. But has the most rev. Prelate forgotten that under this Bill it is not proposed to take over the schools belonging to denominations without paying a rent for them? That is one thing. Then when we come to the question of supporting and maintaining these schools out of public funds, I think it will be seen that immediately the levelling up begins a very large sum will have to be paid in respect of denominational schools. That process may not begin immediately, because large sums were given last year in relief of rates, and I venture to think that the Government gave those sums in the belief that if the whole of the cost of levelling up came upon the rates the policy would be enormously unpopular. But those sums have also to be taken into account. Taking the whole of the schools throughout the country, it will probably be found that those payments from the Government, if the schools are maintained in their present position, will leave a balance. But I hope they will not be left in that position. Many of them are exceedingly inefficient, and will have to be levelled up to the standard of efficiency to be found in the Board schools. That will no doubt entail a considerable expenditure out of the rates. I am not sure how much it will come to. A penny rate yields about £180,000 a year, and that sum, capitalised, would very soon greatly exceed the capital sum which has been spent by the denominational bodies on the maintenance of their schools. I maintain, therefore, that no such injustice as has been suggested will be inflicted by these proposals. That is one of the points I wish to make.

We now come to the question of religion in the schools. I am in favour of religious education. I believe that the religious education in the Board schools of London has been eminently satisfactory. That the School Board for London is not a Nonconformist preserve is very manifest if we look at what has been the constitution of the Board during its existence. Since its establishment, sixty-three clergymen, seventeen Nonconformist ministers, and four Catholic priests have been members of the Board. There are 183 groups of managers, the chairmen of fifty-five of which are clergymen, and of nine, Nonconformist ministers. Among the managers are 346 clergymen of the Church of England, and 135 Nonconformist ministers. We see there the influence of the Church, and the most rev. Prelate has spoken of the fact that the teachers in the schools are being largely drawn from Church of England colleges and other colleges where religion is taught. He also said that the religious teaching which has characterised with such distinction the management of the London School Board had been, as he termed it, "infectious." Why should not the same state of things exist in the future? If the best teachers come from institutions in which sound religious teaching is given, I believe it will be found that a good educational body, having the real interests of education at heart, will continue to follow the example of the London School Board, and that the same selection will be made in the future as in the past. The most rev. Prelate alluded to another matter of great importance. He said that with regard to the Jews the London School Board had actually transgressed the general rule concerning the teaching of dogma, and had issued a special syllabus. I should like to know whether that syllabus actually teaches dogma. I understand that the ordinary rules of the London School Board with regard to religion, which included teaching from the New Testament, were altogether inapplicable to Jewish children, and so they were modified, but without the Cowper-Temple clause being in any way transgressed. If that is so, the strong argument of the most rev. Prelate falls to the ground.

Why is it we are going to sweep away the London School Board? Everybody admits that that body has done its work with the utmost efficiency, and for the good of the whole population of London. I cannot for the life of me see why it should be abolished. One argument of the noble Marquess, which he said was important, was that all calls on the rates should come under one body. In other words, that is the argument for the municipalisation of education. I can quite understand that principle in theory, and it would be most desirable if you could enable the one body to know exactly what every branch of administration under it had to spend. But if you do not know how much you are going to spend on education, how are you to know how much to spend on omnibuses, electric cars, drains, and so forth? It is very important, if possible, that one body should hold in its hands all the different strings and know exactly what the expenditure in each direction will be; but is it practicable? We know that the principle has not been applied generally. It has never been applied in regard to Poor Law administration. The poor rate and the questions of settlement have never been placed in the hands of County or Borough Councils. It is the same with regard to education. You are trying to carry out this principle, and I am afraid that the statement of an hon. Member in the other House—viz., that if you destroy the School Board you will at the same time wreck the County Council, will prove to be near the truth. Just conceive for a moment what the work of the County Council will be. They will have to superintend the education of 1,000,000 children, involving the expenditure of £4,000,000 a year. There are about the same number of children in the whole of Scotland, but they are looked after by 972 School Boards and thirty-nine Secondary Education Committees, while Birmingham and Manchester have only one-tenth of the number of children in the Metropolis. This is altogether apart from Secondary Education. If we take the large counties of Lancashire and Yorkshire we only get something approaching two-thirds of the population and the educational necessities of London. In trying to carry out this principle of municipalisation, for which I have considerable sympathy, I cannot help thinking you may do a great deal of harm by attempting something which is almost impossible of achievement.

I have dwelt at some length upon these matters, but they are of great importance. There is one other point to which reference has been made and upon which I wish to add a word—viz., the question of women. No work has been done so efficiently, so ably, and so zealously, as that of the women who have been elected to the London School Board. Are you going to do away with that? You will do so if you abolish the London School Board, because, even if the Government were willing to make such an alteration, it would be impossible so to amend the present Bill as to enable women to be elected to the County Council. I should be glad to see a large number among the managers, but they will not be supported by the voice of the constituents which gives so much greater influence to the members of a body.

I have little more to say. The right rev. Prelate who last spoke, the Bishop of Rochester, made a very interesting speech, and, as usual, touched in a moderate way many controversial subjects. He referred to the right rev. Prelate the Bishop of Hereford, and, while rejoicing that he showed there was a difference of opinion on the right rev. Bench, expressed regret that his right rev. brother did not more often mediate between the parties rather than express his own view. It is always difficult for a man with strong and decided views to mediate between rival parties, and I venture to think that the great ability and clearness of vision of the right rev.

Prelate make him hold very decided opinions on questions of this sort, which prevent him acting as a mediator. The right rev. Prelate the Bishop of Rochester spoke of people who in this controversy thought all the justice was on one side, and denominational greed and selfishness on the other. I entirely repudiate such a feeling. I do not ascribe to the right rev. Bench, denominational greed and selfishness, though I am afraid that once or twice last year things were done which might be interpreted in that way. I am quite ready to believe that the occupants of the right rev. Bench are actuated by a desire for justice. At the same time, justice is not one-sided. One right rev. Prelate said that he, like Dr. Horton, trusted the people, but, if I understand him correctly, he went on to qualify the statement by saying that they must look to the principles of the Church, and if the people did not agree to those principles they could not trust them, but if they did agree to them they would. We are anxious to do what we consider to be justice in these matters, and I venture to think that the opinions which I and many of my friends hold are those of justice to the people of this country, and that if this Bill is carried, as the Bill of last year was carried, gross injustice will be inflicted on many people who are conscientiously opposed to the principles of the Bill. I shall, therefore, heartily support my noble friend the Chairman of the School Board in the Motion he has moved.

THE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (The DUKE of DEVONSHIRE): Before I advert to the arguments used by the noble Earl and others I must refer to the criticism made on the form of the Bill. The noble Earl complained that, as usual, the practice had been adopted of legislating by reference. I do not think that anybody, excepting Parliamentary draftsmen, has any great affection for this system of legislation by reference, but I think it is carrying objection to the system to a somewhat absurd extreme if, as I understand he does, the noble Earl suggests that instead of adopting the Act of last year and applying and adapting it to London, we ought to have taken the course of re-enacting the whole of last year's Act with such modifications and omissions as were necessary to apply it to London. The noble Earl could hardly have made the suggestion seriously. If such a course had been taken the other House would have enjoyed the opportunity of discussing again the Act of last year, clause by clause and section by section, and it would have been absolutely impossible to deal with any other matter except the subject with which the House of Commons was almost wholly occupied during last Session. So much for that criticism. I shall have to detain the House only for a very short time in referring to the arguments which have been adduced in support of the Amendment moved by the noble Lord opposite, because, so far as I have been able to gather, very little has been said which applies to the only question raised by the Second Reading of this Bill. Almost all the speeches on both sides to-night have had reference to the Act of last session. I propose to say nothing, or next to nothing, in regard to that measure. That Act was fully discussed last year; it is now the law of the land, and until it is repealed it remains the law of the land. I know that it is exposed to a certain amount of "passive resistance." I wish noble Lords opposite had seen their way, not only to dissociate themselves from that passive resistance moment, but to discourage it. But they have not thought fit to do so. Now, my Lords, there is no practical object in discussing in this session, or even in this Parliament, the principles of the Act of last year. We all know perfectly well what is the attitude of noble Lords opposite, and their political friends in the other House and in the country. They have protested against the principles of the Act, and announced their determination to repeal that Act, or portions of it, as soon as they are in a position to do so. They have made their protest and they have announced their intentions, and they are perfectly justified in so doing; but we are not concerned to-night with that Act except in so far as it is now proposed to apply it to London and provide for the manner in which it is to be applied.

There has been scarcely a single speech which has been addressed to that question, which is the only question the House has to consider to-night. Nobody supposes that the present Government or the present Parliament is going to repeal the Act of last year; therefore, the only question before us is that raised by the first clause of the Bill which applies the Act to London. It is quite open to noble Lords, I admit, to reopen, if they think fit, the whole question of the Act of last year; but I do not see the advantage of that. They do not propose now to repeal the Act; we do not propose to modify it. It is a question, not of the present but for the future, as to what is to be done with the Act. The question we have to consider—and this is the definite question raised by the Bill—is whether London is to be included in or excluded from the operation of the Act of last year. What will be the consequences to London if it is excluded from the Act? In London there will still exist two different independent authorities dealing, one with secondary and the other with elementary education. That is a point which I do not think has been once adverted to in this debate. The consequence of the exclusion of London and the existence of these two separate bodies would be that proper co-ordination in the matter of education, such as we hope to effect by this Bill, and which is going on all over the country, would be impossible in London. A further consequence would be that London would not get the benefit of that rearrangement, and the increase of the Parliamentary grant, of which every other portion of the country now gets the benefit. The third consequence would be that the denominational schools would remain starved, and therefore comparatively inefficient. I have not heard a single word from the opposite benches which dealt with any of those consequences. The real question raised by this Bill, then, is the manner in which the Act of last year should be applied to London. We admit that London has many special difficulties from an educational point of view. There are enormous areas, a vast population, an immense number of schools, and a special form of local government. These circumstances constitute a special condition, of which we were perfectly aware last year, and are aware of still, rendering the educational treatment of London a problem somewhat different from that in any other portion of the country. In this Bill, as presented to Parliament, the Government showed a desire to establish the educational authority in a manner somewhat different to that which had been applied to the rest of the country, but a full discussion in the other House convinced them that upon the whole as close an adherence as possible to the principle of the Act of last year would be the safest and the wisest course.

The main principle of the Act of last year was the creation in every educational area throughout the country of one supreme local authority. In London, as I have said, there are two independent educational authorities. I will not go back on the discussions of last year, but every educational authority has admitted that there can be no sound or efficient system of education in any area, whether urban or rural, great or small, where such a principle of divided educational administration obtains. If that be so, if London is not an exception to all the rest of the Kingdom, if one supreme authority is necessary, the question is, how should that supreme authority be constituted? It is evident that it can be done only by the disappearance of one or both of the existing authorities, or by merging one into the other. I will not renew the discussions of last year on the merits of an *ad hoc* authority, I say that in the case of London the arguments for the municipalisation of the authority as against an *ad hoc* authority are not only strong but overwhelming. It is not necessary for our case to go into the abstract arguments. In the existing conditions of local administration in London the adoption of an *ad hoc* authority as the single supreme authority is impossible. Noble Lords talk about the sweeping away or the disestablishment of the School Board. But to have placed the School Board in the position of the single supreme authority would have involved the disestablishment or the sweeping away of the powers over secondary education which are already possessed by the London County Council, and by that Act you would have deprived the Council of one of its greatest and most important functions—discharged, in the opinion of noble Lords opposite, most efficiently—and of powers possessed by every other County Council, and by the Council of every County Borough. Such an attack on the authority, dignity and privileges of the London County Council could not be contemplated for a moment, and had there been any such intention suggested I am sure noble Lords opposite would have been the first to protest against it.

I regret that in the necessity of things the merging of the School Board should have become necessary. I acknowledge the Board's excellent work. With the powers it possessed it has done admirable work, and I have no doubt that with larger powers it would have done still better and greater work. For good or for evil those larger powers connected with secondary education not only have not been conferred upon the School Board, but they have been conferred by Parliament upon another body. Therefore, if we were of opinion—as we were—that that which was good for every town in the country was also good for London, and that a single authority was an absolutely essential matter and not a matter of choice, the disappearance of the School Board, in which was vested the control over only part of the question, was bound to follow as a matter of absolute necessity. I agree entirely with what was said in the other House by the late Vice-President of the Council, Sir John Gorst. He said that he would not describe the object of this Bill as the disestablishment of the School Board. He preferred to describe it, and I prefer to describe it, as the regrettable consequence of the principle which was embodied in the Act of last year—viz., that of the establishment of a single authority, which rendered necessary the disappearance of a special body which had been charged by Parliament with only one portion of the work.

Another objection which is taken to our proposal to make the County Council the supreme authority for London is that the County Council will be unable to grapple with the work. But, although the County Council will be the authority under the Bill, it will have a new Committee through which it will do that portion of the work, and upon the Committee it will be able to place as many outside members as it may think necessary in order to grapple with this enormous amount of work. If the London County Council should find that it is necessary that the work should be transacted on the same lines as those which have been adopted on the School Board, and if this and other work devolving on the County Council should be found to be larger and more onerous than can be undertaken by the present number of members, there is nothing in the nature of things which prevents some enlargement of the present number. But I believe there is a better and a simpler way in which it may be possible for the London County Council to grapple with this work. Admirable as has been the work which the School Board has done, I am not so certain as the Chairman of the Board that the method in which they have done their work has been so perfect, so well considered, as to render an absolute imitation of it necessary to the best success. I would refer to a speech made in the other House describing the way in which the School Board has done its work. Dr. Macnamara, an active member of the Board, said—

"Take the School Board alone, excluding altogether the work of voluntary schools and higher education. Here is the diary issued to members of the School Board for the present week :—Monday, 10.30, special sub-committee of School Management Committee, on special subjects of instruction; noon, teaching staff sub-committee of School Management Committee. At that one meeting there were 141 teachers to be seen, considered for promotion, or, in extreme cases, for criticism in consequence of default of duty. Also at noon, sub-committee of Pupil Teachers' Committee on the preliminary selection of assistants to Stockwell and Marylebone pupil teachers' centres; 1 o'clock, sub-committee of Works Committee on contracts; 2 o'clock, special sub-committee of Works Committee on solicitors' charges and litigation cases; 2.30, General Purposes Committee; 3 o'clock, sites and finance sub-committtee of Works Committee; also at 3 o'clock, Evening Continuation Schools Committee, at which there are frequently 100 teachers to be considered, appointed, or transferred. That is yesterday. What is the diary for to-day? At 10.30, sub-committee of Finance Committee on Accounts; 10.30, Finance rota; 11 o'clock, Finance Committee; 2 o'clock, sub-committee of Works Committee on Repairs. It will be the same to-morrow. On Thursday the Board will meet for four or five hours' public session. On Friday there is the meeting of a big and onerous committee—the School Management Committee; and I take it that Saturday and Sunday will be spent in reading up the agendas for the following week."

My Lords, admirable as may have been the work of the School Board, I venture to doubt whether that is altogether an ideal method by which the business of a great education department should be transacted. The business of the School Board is a business which in its importance and its magnitude compares not unequally with the business of one of the great Departments of the State. In finance alone—leaving out of account all the far more important questions affecting the moral and intellectual training of the children—in finance alone it compares not unequally with one of those great Departments. Its expenditure is larger, I think, than that of any of our greatest industrial or commercial concerns. But none of the great Departments of the State, or of our great commercial undertakings, manage their business in this way. The business of the Army and the Navy is not transacted by a Committee of unpaid Members of the House of Commons, neither is the business of a great railway company transacted in detail by committees of this description. The business of the Board and its committees is to decide questions of general policy, and supervise the action of tried and trusted permanent officials. Lord Tweedmouth, I think, said that it was a misrepresentation to say that the School Board trusted nobody and delegated nothing; but I think this account that I have just read of the work of the School Board shows that it was considered necessary for efficient administration that they should do everything for themselves, and I do not see how in this minute subdivision of business there can be anything left which they trusted to any of their officials. I believe the London School Board would find, and that the London County Council will find, that their work can be more efficiently performed by improved methods, perhaps by some re-arrangement of their staff, and by delegating some portion of these detail duties to competent and well-paid officials, whose action it will be their duty to supervise, rather than by undertaking it themselves.

Everybody admits that there must be decentralisation. In the first draft of this Bill an attempt was made to indicate the manner in which that decentralisation, or some part of it, should be effected. It was proposed that the management—that is to say, the detailed management—of the elementary schools should be entrusted to the Borough Councils. More wisely, I think, it has been decided in the Bill as it has reached us to leave it to the County Council themselves, after making themselves fully acquainted with their work, to decide in what manner they shall carry out the decentralisation which certainly they must undertake to carry out. All that has been done in the Bill as it now stands is to indicate the Borough Councils as a body to whom they may profitably delegate a very large share of the management of the schools in their area. The right rev. Prelate the Bishop of Rochester asked, I think, why the Bill proposed that a majority of the managers should be appointed by the Borough Council and not by the County Council. Well, the object of that provision is—and I hope that it will be attained—to give to the Borough Councils a real interest in the schools within their areas, and we do not see that there is any better way in which we can inspire that interest in the Borough Councils than by giving to them a substantial and even a predominant voice in the appointment of those managers, who will, subject to the supervision and under the control of the local education authority, carry on the ordinary detailed administration of the schools. I hope that the effect of these proposals—which no doubt must be more or less tentative and experimental for the present—will be to establish a greater amount of harmony and co-operation between the various local bodies who are responsible for the administration of the affairs of London. I trust that not only so, but that these changes will attain the object for which the Act of last year was introduced—namely, that of improving the efficiency and of raising the character of the education of the people of this country, and that this Bill will extend those same advantages to London.

On Question, whether the word "now" stand part of the Motion,

Their Lordships divided:—Contents, 69; Not-Contents, 26.

CONTENTS.

Canterbury, L. Abp.
Halsbury, E. (*L. Chancellor.*)
Devonshire, D. (*L. President.*)
Norfolk, D. (*E. Marshal.*)
Argyll, D.
Marlborough, D.
Northumberland, D.
Wellington, D.

Ailesbury, M.
Camden, M.
Lansdowne, M.

Pembroke and Montgomery, E. (*L. Steward.*)
Clarendon, E. (*L. Chamberlain.*)
Abingdon, E.
Cadogan, E.
Camperdown, E.
Denbigh, E.
Doncaster, E. (*D. Buccleuch and Queensberry.*)
Eldon, E.
Hardwicke, E.
Lytton, E.
Morley, E.
Morton, E.
Nelson, E.
Onslow, E.
Stanhope, E.
Vane, E. (*M. Londonderry.*)

Waldegrave, E. [*Teller.*]
Yarborough, E.

Cross, V.
Hutchinson, V. (*E. Donoughmore.*)
Knutsford, V.
London, L. Bp.
Rochester, L. Bp.
Winchester, L. Bp.

Acton, L.
Allerton, L.
Alverstone, L.
Ashbourne, L.
Balfour, L.
Barnard, L.
Belper, L.
Brave, L.
Brodrick, L. (*V. Midleton.*)
Colchester, L.
Cottesloe, L.
Crawshaw, L.

Dawnay, L. (*V. Downe.*)
De L'Isle and Dudley, L.
De Mauley, L.
Dunboyne, L.
Ellenborough, L.
Glenesk, L.
Harris, L.
Kenyon, L.
Kintore, L. (*E. Kintore.*)
Lamington, L.
Lawrence, L. [*Teller.*]
Macnaghten, L.
Methuen, L.
Middleton, L.
Redesdale, L.
Robertson, L.
Rothschild, L.
Shute, L. (*V. Barrington.*)
Stewart of Garlies, L. (*E. Galloway.*)
Suffield, L.
Windsor, L.
Wolverton, L.

NOT-CONTENTS.

Beauchamp, E.
Carrington, E.
Crewe, E.
Kimberley, E.
Northbrook, E.
Portsmouth, E.
Russell, E.
Spencer, E.
Gordon, V. (*E. Aberdeen.*)

Hereford, L. Bp.
Boyle, L. (*E. Cork and Orrery.*)
Burghclere, L.
Coleridge, L.
Davey, L.
Farrer, L.
Kinnaird, L.
Lyveden, L.
Monkswell, L.

Reay, L.
Ribblesdale, L. [*Teller.*]
Rosebery, L. (*E. Rosebery.*)
Sandhurst, L. [*Teller.*]
Sudley, L. (*E. Arran.*)
Tweedmouth, L.
Wandsworth L.
Welby, L.

Bill read 2^{a} accordingly, and committed to a Committee of the whole House on Thursday next.

METROPOLITAN STREETS BILL.

House in Committee (according to order). Bill reported without Amendment; Standing Committee negatived; and Bill to be read 3^{a} on Thursday next.

MOTOR-CARS BILL [H. L.]

Read 3^{a} (according to Order).

Drafting Amendment agreed to.

The Earl of ROSSLYN asked whether the paragraph which had been inserted at line 11, on page 2, was meant to safeguard foreigners on their arrival in this country, and whether the clause, in the opinion of the noble Lord in charge of the Bill, was sufficient to protect such foreigners from police annoyance.

Lord BALFOUR of BURLEIGH said the words were those he had promised to insert, and he was advised that they were sufficient for the purpose.

The Earl of NORTHBROOK moved a new clause providing that the Act should also apply to persons in the public service of the Crown. He thought it was obviously to the public advantage that the Amendment should be passed, and he understood the Government would raise no objection.

Amendment moved.

"After Clause 13 to insert as a new clause, 'A person shall not be exempt from any of the provisions of this Act by reason only of his being in the public service of the Crown.'"—(*The Earl of Northbrook.*)

Lord BALFOUR of BURLEIGH said he was willing to accept the Amendment on the understanding that in another place it would probably be necessary to exclude actual servants of the Crown from having to take out a licence under the local authority. He had no objection, nor had the Departments concerned, to servants of the Crown coming under the penalty clauses if they drove recklessly or committed any other offence, but it would be inconvenient for postal servants, and others acting under the orders of their own superior officers, to be obliged to take out licences under the local authority. With that reservation he accepted the Amendment.

Amendment agreed to.

Moved, That the Bill do now pass.

The Earl of ROSSLYN rose to protest against an Amendment, of which he had given private notice, being passed over without any opportunity being afforded for its consideration.

LORD TWEEDMOUTH pointed out that one of the rules of the House was that Amendments on the Third Reading could not be made unless they appeared on the Paper. It was extremely desirable that that rule should be adhered to.

THE EARL OF ROSSLYN explained that he had been advised that he would be able to move the Amendment.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR (The EARL of HALSBURY) said he was not aware that any Amendment had been passed over.

LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH said the noble Earl gave private notice of an Amendment, but did not put it on the Paper. He (Lord Balfour of Burleigh) moved an Amendment increasing the penalty which came in at the same point, and as the noble Earl did not then speak, he thought he accepted that Amendment in place of his own.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR pointed out that if the noble Earl had followed the proceedings he would have noticed when his Amendment should have come in.

THE EARL OF ROSSLYN said the Amendments were put so rapidly he was unable to follow them.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR: Something in the nature of decorum is always considered appropriate in this House.

Bill passed, and sent to the Commons.

House adjourned at five minutes before Twelve o'clock, to Thursday next, a quarter past Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Tuesday, 28*th July*, 1903.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

GREAT NORTHERN, PICCADILLY AND BROMPTON RAILWAY (VARIOUS POWERS) BILL.

MR. DISRAELI (Cheshire, Altrincham) asked why the preamble of the Bill had been omitted.

MR. CALDWELL (Lanarkshire, Mid): This question is only put for purposes of annoyance, and if other hon. Members adopted the same course it would bring Private Bill Business to a deadlock. It is not my duty to explain the details of the Bill. If the hon. Gentleman opposes the Bill, it will have to be taken at an Evening Sitting, and the necessary explanation can then be got from the promoters.

MR. DISRAELI, on a point of order, took exception to the statement that his object was to annoy the hon. Member. His object had been to obtain information for the House.

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member ought not to impute motives, but at the same time he is quite right in saying that it is not his duty to explain the merits of or advocate Bills. It is greatly for the convenience of the House that there should be some one familiar with its practice to carry on in proper form the Private Business.

MR. CALDWELL: The hon. Gentleman told me last night that he would block every Private Bill to-day, and I think I was justified from that statement in making the observation I did.

Lords' Amendments agreed to.

LONDON, TILBURY AND SOUTHEND RAILWAY BILL.

MR. DISRAELI asked again for an explanation of certain Amendments. He declared that they were purely agents' Amendments, and the House ought to know what it was doing. The hon. Member for Mid Lanark was a mere dummy sitting there doing nothing.

*MR. SPEAKER said the hon. Member was not entitled to use such language. If he had any real objection the Bill could stand over. That was the understood practice and he could not expect the hon. Member for Mid Lanark to answer these Questions.

MR. DISRAELI: Had we better not have some one there who does know about these Bills.

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member can object, and the Bill will be ordered for a future day when those interested will attend.

MR. DISRAELI: I have no wish to do that.

Lords' Amendments agreed to.

North Western Electricity and Power-Gas Bill [Lords]. Reported, with Amendments.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

London County Council (General Powers) Bill; Watford and Edgware Railway Bill. Lords' Amendments considered and agreed to.

Barry Railway Bill [Lords]. Read the third time, and passed, with Amendments.

Dewsbury, Batley, and Birstal Tramways Bill [Lords]; Manchester Southern Tramways Bill [Lords]. Read the third time, and passed, with Amendments.

Pentillie Estate Bill [Lords]. Read the third time, and passed, without Amendment.

Worthing Corporation Tramways Bill [Lords]. Read the third time, and passed, with Amendments.

Bristol Corporation Bill [Lords]; West Bromwich Corporation Bill [Lords]. As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

Lanarkshire Tramways Order Confirmation Bill [Lords]. Read a second time; to be considered to-morrow.

Tramways Orders Confirmation (No. 1) Bill [Lords]. Reported, with Amendments [Provisional Orders confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

Bill, as amended, to be considered to-morrow.

Tramways Orders Confirmation (No. 2) Bill [Lords]. Reported, with Amendments [Provisional Orders confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

Bill, as amended, to be considered to-morrow.

Salford Corporation Bill [Lords]; South Staffordshire Tramways Bill [Lord]; Hastings Harbour District Railway Bill [Lords]; Liverpool University Bill [Lords]. Reported, with Amendments; Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

Kip's Patents Bill [Lords]. Reported, without Amendment; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill to be read the third time.

Bangor Corporation Bill [Lords]; Shropshire and Worcestershire Electric Power Bill [Lords]. Reported, with Amendments. Reports to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

Brighton Corporation Bill [Lords] Reported, with Amendments, from the Police and Sanitary Committee. Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have agreed to Bath Corporation Water Bill; East Ham Improvement Bill; Dublin, Wicklow, and Wexford Railway Bill, with Amendments.

Amendments to Sutton Coldfield Corporation Bill [Lords], without Amendment.

That they disagree to one of the Amendments to each of the following Bills, viz.:—Carmarthenshire Electric Power Bill [Lords]; Fife Electric Power Bill [Lords], for which disagreements they assign their reasons, and agree to the rest of the Amendments to the said Bills, without Amendment.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to define the ranking and priority of the mortgages of the Hastings Harbour Commissioners already issued and to be issued under former Acts for the completion of the harbour works; to extend the periods limited for the purchase of lands for and for the completion of such works, and for other purposes." [Hastings Harbour Bill [Lords].

Hastings Harbour Bill [Lords]. Read the first time, and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

PETITION.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.

Petition from Farringdon, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

SOUTH AFRICA (INDIAN COOLIES).

Copy presented, of correspondence relating to a proposal to employ Indian coolies under indenture on railways in the Transvaal and Orange River Colony [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

CHURCHES (CITY OF LONDON).

Return presented, relative thereto [Address 23rd February; *Mr. Talbot*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

PARISHES (UNITED, DIVIDED, ETC.).

Return presented, relative thereto [Address 23rd February; *Mr. Talbot*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 278.]

DEATHS FROM STARVATION OR ACCELERATED BY PRIVATION (LONDON).

Return presented, relative thereto [Address 23rd March; *Mr. Talbot*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 279.]

PARLIAMENTARY BOROUGHS, ETC. (DIAGRAMS.)

Return presented, relative thereto [Address 7th May; *Mr. Kimber*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 280.]

PROBATION OF FIRST OFFENDERS.

Return presented, relative thereto [Address 6th July; *Sir Howard Vincent*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 281.]

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3042 to 3048 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

LOCAL TAXATION (IRELAND) RETURNS.

Copy presented, of Returns of Local Taxation in Ireland for the year 1901–2 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Woolwich Arsenal Explosion—Provision for Widows and Children of Men killed.

DR. SHIPMAN (Northampton): To ask the First Lord of the Treasury what is the nature or amount of the provision which the Government has made for the relief of the widows and children of the men who lost their lives in the recent explosion at Woolwich.

(*Answered by Mr. A. J. Balfour.*) Provision has been made on the principle of a gratuity for the child or children of any man who lost his life in the explosion, and a pension for his widow. The awards were made under a scheme accepted by the working staff at Woolwich in preference to the scale fixed by the Workmen's Compensation Act.

Enrolment of Naval Volunteers.

SIR THOMAS DEWAR (Tower Hamlets, St. George's): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty if he will state what progress has been made with the enrolment of the Royal Naval Volunteers under the Naval Forces Act; and how many men have been enrolled in London.

(*Answered by Mr. Arnold-Forster.*) The actual enrolment of Royal Naval Volunteers under the Naval Forces Act has not yet commenced. The Admiralty Volunteer Committee, the appointment of which was announced immediately on the Naval Forces Bill becoming law on the 30th June last, is at present actively engaged in completing the necessary arrangements for the establishment of volunteer divisions at the principal maritime centres, and an announcement will shortly be made as to the appointment of officers to the command of two of these divisions—viz., London and the Clyde. These officers will in due course proceed with the work of enrolment, and it is hoped that the work of recruiting and drilling will soon be taken in hand at both centres.

Prisoners under the Vagrancy Act Sentenced to be Flogged.

MR. LLOYD MORGAN (Carmarthenshire, W.): To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he will state the number of prisoners sentenced to be flogged who were sent to the sessions to be sentenced under the Vagrancy Act during the years 1900, 1901, and 1902 respectively.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers-Douglas.*) There were two cases in 1900, none in 1901, and one in 1902.

Postal Facilities at Rathmullen, County Donegal.

MR. O'DOHERTY (Donegal, N.): To ask the Postmaster-General if he will state the number of mail services at present to Rathmullen, County Donegal, and the hours of arrival and departure of mails into and from this town, and the routes by which the mails come thereto from Londonderry; and whether he will consider the advisability of having the morning mail conveyed by steamer from Fahan instead of by car from Letterkenny, as at present.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) I will make inquiry on the subject, and send an answer to the hon. Member as soon as possible.

Extra Remuneration of Sub-postmasters.

MR. SCHWANN (Manchester, N.): To ask the Postmaster-General if it be intended to increase the remuneration of the sub-postmasters, owing to the extra labour and responsibility involved in the issue of the new additional postal orders.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) It is not intended to increase the remuneration of sub-postmasters for postal order work; but I may state that I am considering the general question of their remuneration, with the view especially of benefiting those at the very small offices.

German Duties on British Produce.

COLONEL SADLER (Middlesbrough): To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been directed to the recently published statistics showing that in the past decade British imports into Germany have decreased 10,400,000 marks annually, whilst the exports from Germany to Great Britain have increased by 325,500,000 marks per annum, or 50 per cent.; and, if so, whether he will renew his remonstrances against the proposed new German tariff, which increases the duties on many of the manufactured articles sent from this country to Germany.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) The figures quoted appear to be taken from the Imperial German Returns, which show, not the British goods imported into Germany, but the total imports into Germany from the United Kingdom, including foreign goods re-exported and also including bullion and specie. Moreover, the decrease and increase quoted are not annual, as stated, but refer to a ten-year period If merchandise only be included, the same Returns show that imports of goods from the United Kingdom into Germany increased by 9,720,000 marks in place of the decrease stated in the Question. An examination of the Trade Accounts of the United Kingdom shows that there was a very much larger increase in the exports of British produce into Germany, which was largely set off by a decline in the re-exports of foreign and colonial goods. I give the figures for Germany, Holland, and Belgium together, in view of the difficulty of identifying the trade which passes through Belgian and Dutch ports. Increase or decrease in exports from the United Kingdom to Germany, Holland, and Belgium, between 1892 and 1902, as shown in United Kingdom Accounts: British produce (increase), £6,339,000; re-exports of foreign and colonial produce (decrease), £5,639,000; net increase, £700,000. The figures in the United Kingdom and German Accounts do not agree exactly, for reasons explained in my reply to the hon. Member for Merthyr on the 20th instant.† The new German tariff is being carefully watched. As the hon. and gallant Member is aware, the tariff is not at present applicable to British goods, and is subject to modification as the result of negotiations for commercial treaties before it is put into operation.

Canadian Exports shipped through American Ports.

MR. PARTINGTON (Derbyshire, High Peak): To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he can give the value and quantity of Canadian foodstuffs shipped through American ports during the months of last winter in which the Canadian ports were icebound; and can he also state whether these exports are allowed to pass through American territory free of duty.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) The answer to the first part of the Question is in the negative; these exports are allowed to pass through American territory free of duty under bond.

Inadequacy of Cottage Accommodation at Erpingham, Norfolk.

MR. SCHWANN: To ask the President of the Local Government Board whether his attention has been drawn to the inadequacy of the cottage accommodation and the condition of the cottages in the rural districts of Erpingham, Norfolk, necessitating recently the accommodation of one or more whole families in the Workhouse at West Beckham, because no cottage could be found for them; and whether, in view of the fact that fifteen months ago, and again three months ago, application was made by the rural district council to the County Council for powers to adopt Part III. of The Housing of the Working Classes Act, 1890, and such powers have not yet been granted, he will say what action the Department will now take in the matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) I am aware that the medical officer of health has referred in his annual report to the inadequacy of the house accommodation for the working classes in this rural district. I have not received any information as to the matter referred to in the last part of the Question, but I will make inquiry on the subject.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxxv., 1134.

London Education.

DR. MACNAMARA (Camberwell, N.): To ask the Secretary to the Board of Education what steps it is proposed to take to meet the circumstance that whilst the term of office of the present School Board for London expires on 30th November, 1903, the London County Council will not assume jurisdiction under the London Education Bill until 1st May, 1904.

(*Answered by Sir William Anson.*) As I said on 13th July,† in reply to a similar Question from the hon. Member for South Hackney, on the London Education Bill becoming law, Schedule II. (10) of the principal Act will apply.

Exports from India.

SIR MANCHERJEE BHOWNAGGREE (Bethnal Green, N.E.): To ask the Secretary of State for India, in view of the fact that it is stated in the Board of Trade Return showing the Imports and Exports of the United Kingdom, dated 22nd June and presented recently to the House, that the imports into the United Kingdom fell from £32,234,000 in 1891 to £28,794,000 in 1902, whether the exports from India to other British possessions and to foreign countries have increased during the period; and, if so, by how much in each case.

(*Answered by Secretary Lord George Hamilton.*) The Indian Trade Returns give the value of the exports of Indian produce and manufacture (excluding treasure) from India to British possessions and to foreign countries in 1891–2 and 1901–2, respectively, as follows:—

(In tens of Rupees.)

	1891-2.	1901-2.	Increase.
	Rx.	Rx.	Rx.
To British possessions (excluding the United Kingdom)	20,789,000	26,392,000	5,603,000
To foreign countries	49,315,000	64,442,000	15,127,000

Improved Landing Accommodation at Kinnagoe Bay, Co. Donegal.

MR. O'DOHERTY: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Congested Districts Board have as yet concluded their investigations into the necessity for the improvement of the landing accommodation at Kinnagoe Bay, near Moville; County Donegal, and, if so, will he state with what result.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) The landing place at Kinnagoe Bay has been inspected by a committee of members of the Board. Further consideration of the proposal to improve the landing accommodation there has been postponed.

Irish Model Schools Inquiry.

MR. DILLON (Mayo, E.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the inquiry into the model schools in Ireland, which was in progress in 1897, was completed; whether the Report and evidence have ever been presented to Parliament; and, if not, whether he can state when they will be presented.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) This question was referred to the Board of National Education, who have made a statement as follows:—A committee of the Board to inquire into the working of the model schools was appointed on the 5th January, 1897. The committee sat at various times between January and August, 1897. During that period the committee inquired into the working of the central model schools only, and made certain recommendations to the Board, which were subsequently given effect to. The investigation into the cases of the other model schools, twenty-nine in number, has not yet taken place, although some preliminary Returns have been called for. The changes in the system of national education brought about by the recommendations of the Manual and Practical Instruction Commission of 1898, involving the revision of (a) the entire school programme; (b) the methods of promotion and payment of the teachers; (c) the methods of inspection of schools and modifications in the classification, method of appointment, promotion, and remuneration of the inspectors, together with other important changes in the system, occupied so fully the time of the Board that the model school inquiry was necessarily suspended. Last year the Board directed that the inquiry should be resumed. It must be observed, however, that owing to the changes in the national system above alluded to the model school question has assumed a new phase. Under the revised arrangements model school teachers come under the same conditions of the service as the teachers of ordinary national schools, and are subject to the same regulations in regard to promotion and payment. Model schools are now somewhat like ordinary national schools which are vested in the Commissioners, that is, the buildings are maintained at the cost of the State, and the teachers are paid, in the case of new appointments, according to the same scales as the teachers of ordinary national schools. Model schools really only differ from ordinary national schools vested in the Commissioners in having a staff of pupil teachers and some teachers of special subjects, and in being under the direct management of the Board instead of local management. It is impossible to say when the committee of inquiry will terminate its labours.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxxv., 393.

Construction of Piers at Gortnasate and Falchorrib, County Donegal.

MR. HUGH LAW (Donegal, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the County Council of Donegal has now given the required guarantee in connection with the piers proposed to be built at Gortnasate and Falchorrib under the Marine Works Act; and, if so, when it is intended to commence the construction of these works.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) The County Council has agreed to give the required guarantee in respect to the works proposed at Gortnasate, and the Lord Lieutenant's certificate under the Act has been forwarded to the Treasury. No date can be fixed for the commencement of the works. The question of proceeding with the work proposed at Falchorrib is still under consideration.

Military Bands at Sunday Concerts.

MR. FREEMAN THOMAS (Hastings): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he can reconsider his decision prohibiting the appearance of military bands at Sunday concerts where they play for profit.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*) The Commander-in-Chief carefully considered this question before giving his decision, and I have not hitherto seen cause for re-considering the matter.

Transvaal Diamond Ordinance.

MR. MARKHAM (Nottinghamshire, Mansfield): To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he has received from Lord Milner, Sir A. Lawley, or any other Transvaal official, any despatch, report, letter, or any communication whatsoever relating to the new Diamond Ordinance.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Chamberlain.*) I refer the hon. Gentleman to my answer to the same Question on the 15th of this month.† I am still waiting for Lord Milner's Report.

South Africa—Duty on Dynamite.

MR. MARKHAM: To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether, seeing that under the Bloemfontein Customs Convention the Transvaal Government have agreed to sanction a coast duty on dynamite of £14 a ton, he will say if that Government have any power, in view of the terms of this convention, to levy Excise duty on dynamite imported to the Transvaal and manufactured by the De Beers Company in Cape Colony.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Chamberlain.*) Under Article XVII. the Transvaal has power to levy a Customs duty on dynamite manufactured in the Cape.

Schools in Ceylon.

MR. SCHWANN (Manchester, N.): To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if he will state how many estates schools are provided in Ceylon; what was the total average attendance at the same; what amount of money was found by the Government of Ceylon towards the maintenance of the schools; and has Sir West Ridgeway yet submitted his Reports on the education of Coolie children in the island and also on leprosy in Ceylon.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Chamberlain.*) I am unable to give the information asked for in the first part of the hon.

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† See (4) Debates, cxxv., 697.

Member's Question, but I will ask the Governor to supply it. There has not yet been time for Sir West Ridgeway to send home the Reports referred to at the end of the Question.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

India and the Fiscal Inquiry.

MR. MANSFIELD (Lincolnshire, Spalding): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India has the Indian Government been asked, or will it be asked, to take part in the inquiry into the fiscal policy of the country and the self-governing colonies.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Earl PERCY, Kensington, S.): The Government of India will be fully consulted on the question.

National Debt.

SIR EDGAR VINCENT (Exeter): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if he can state the aggregate gross capital liabilities of the State on the 31st March, 1903, and the estimated corresponding figure for the 31st March, 1904.

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. RITCHIE, Croydon): The dead-weight debt will, it is anticipated, be reduced from £770,779,000 on 31st March last, to £760,619,000 on 31st March next. This is without reckoning anything for the first instalment of the Transvaal war contribution of £10,000,000. The liability on capital accounts for works will be increased from £27,570,000 to £35,870,000, but against these accounts there are assets held, and an automatic sinking fund is borne on the Votes which is, of course, in addition to the sinking fund, included in the annual fixed Debt Charge.

Hansom Cabs.

SIR CHARLES CAYZER (Barrow-in-Furness): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether, having regard to the accidents caused by the falling of horses in hansom cabs, he can see his way to instruct the Commissioner of Police, before granting or renewing hansom cab licences, to ascertain if a handle or some other suitable fastening can be placed on each side of the hansom by which, in the event of the horse falling, the occupant can save himself from being thrown out.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. AKERS DOUGLAS, Kent, St. Augustine's : I am informed by the Commissioner of Police that experiments have from time to time been made with the view of securing the better protection of passengers in hansom cabs, and that every facility is afforded for the testing of appliances designed to provide greater safety or comfort in private carriages. He does not, however, consider it desirable to attempt to enforce, by means of refusing licences, the adoption of any contrivance the advantage of which may, after all, be open to question.

SIR CHARLES CAYZER inquired what steps had been taken after these trials to prevent accidents of this character.

*MR. AKERS DOUGLAS: The Commissioner of Police is always anxious to consider the question, and to have experiments made, but even if he wished to carry out any one particular patent of any one firm it would just have to be made perfectly certain that it provides the safety generally desired.

Iron and Steel Rails.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): On behalf of the hon. Member for Merthyr Tydvil, I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he can state the average tonnage rate per mile charged for the carriage of manufactured iron on British railways, and the average charge as mining rents, wayleaves, and royalties on the materials used in the manufacture of a ton of steel rails in Great Britain.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central): The answer to the first part of the Question is in the negative. Some information with regard to the matters referred to in the last part of the Question is contained in the Report of the Royal Commission on Mining Royalties issued in 1893 (Final Report, paragraphs 42–50).

*SIR CHARLES DILKE: On behalf of the hon. Member for Merthyr Tydvil, I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he can state the average tonnage rate per mile charged for the conveyance of manufactured iron on German and Belgian railways, and the average charge as mining rents, wayleaves, and royalties on the materials used in manufacturing a ton of steel rails in those countries.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Lord CRANBORNE, Rochester): No, Sir; But the hon. Member will find general information on the subject of railway rates in "Commercial No. 2 (1898)"; No. 574 Miscellaneous Series of Diplomatic and Consular Reports; and in the Reports of the Royal Commission on Mining Royalties.

Shipping Statistics.

MR. MANSFIELD: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade will he state what was the total tonnage of British vessels trading with foreign countries for the years 1840, 1850, 1870, 1880, and 1900; also the same particulars as to the trading vessels of France, Germany, and the United States of America.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: The information, so far as available, is contained in the annual Return of the Progress of Merchant Shipping (PP. 329 of 1902), in the Tables of pp. 7, 21, 24 and 28.

Nonconformist Teachers in Church Schools.

SIR JOSEPH LEESE (Lancashire, Accrington): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Education whether, having regard to frequent statements made by the First Lord of the Treasury in debate during the passing of the Education Bill, 1902, that the Bill would open up appointments in denominational schools hitherto closed to young Nonconformists, his attention has been called to the recent case of the refusal by the managers of the Christ Church School in Accrington to appoint Isabella Croft to the position of pupil teacher because she was a Unitarian; and whether he proposes to take any steps in the matter.

THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (Sir WILLIAM ANSON, Oxford University): The Board have no official information on the subject; but I am informed by the correspondent of the school that it was unanimously decided at a meeting of the managers, at which one of the local authority managers was present, that the candidate in question was not under the circumstances the most suitable person for the vacant pupil teachership. The candidate herself fully agreed with this decision. There is no reason to suppose that there is any dearth of openings or opportunities in Accrington for Nonconformists desiring to become pupil teachers, as there are six Nonconformist schools in the town. I understand also that there are at present five Nonconformists on the teaching staff of the three Church schools in this particular parish.

Educational Equipment of the Voluntary Schools.

MR. DUNCAN (Yorkshire, W.R., Otley): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Education whether copies of the book of Common Prayer are educational equipments that may be requisitioned by voluntary schools from the local education authority.

SIR WILLIAM ANSON: The circumstances and conditions under which this question might arise are so various that it is impossible to give any general answer, and it is especially undesirable that I should attempt to do so inasmuch as the matter is one on which an appeal might lie to the Board of Education.

Irish Motor-Car Races—Telegraphists' Duties.

MR. JAMES O'CONNOR (Wicklow, W.): On behalf of the hon. Member for the College Green Division of Dublin, I beg to ask the Postmaster-General, is he aware that telegraphists who were engaged at the Grand Stand, Ballyshannon Cross Roads, in connection with the motor race on the 2nd inst., having performed a full day's duty at the head office, Dublin, on the 1st inst., which in some cases terminated after 8 p.m., were called upon to leave headquarters for the Grand Stand at 2.30 a.m. on 2nd inst., and did not return to headquarters until 5.30 a.m. on 3rd inst., thus performing twenty-seven consecutive hours duty; that no arrangements were made to enable them to obtain rest or refreshment during that time; and, if so, will he take steps to prevent the recurrence of similar circumstances.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. ELLIOT, Durham): The Postmaster-General has asked me to read his answer. The hon. Member has been misinformed as to the facts. The telegraphists sent to Ballyshannon on the 2nd performed their day's duty at Dublin on the 1st in the ordinary course, but only one of them was working after 8 p.m. and his duty terminated at 8.10. He willingly accepted the engagement for Ballyshannon. The staff had intervals for refreshment between 6 and 7 a.m., between 12 noon and 1 p.m., and a short interval before 6 p.m., and in addition occasional reliefs for refreshment and short periods of rest were arranged for throughout the day. After 10 p.m., when the bulk of the work was done, there was no difficulty in regard to rest and refreshment.

Postal Service at Portarlington.

MR. DELANY (Queen's Co., Ossory): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General whether, in view of the fact that Miss Blanc, late assistant at Portarlington, gave twenty-eight and-a-half years service, that her remuneration was paid out of moneys voted by Parliament, and that no censure was passed upon the manner in which she discharged her duties, he will reconsider her case with a view of recommending her claims for a compassionate gratuity to the favourable consideration of the Treasury.

MR. ELLIOT (for Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN): My right hon. friend has already explained in reply to previous Questions † that the capacity in which Miss Blanc was employed did not entitle her to any award from public funds, and he was therefore unable to make any recommendation on the subject.

MR. DELANY: I shall bring this matter up on the Motion of Adjournment.

Killoughy Dispensary Medical Officer.

MR. DELANY: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been drawn to a resolution passed at a special meeting of the Irish Medical Association, held at Tullamore on the 8th instant, protesting against the action of Dr. M'Carthy in accepting the position of medical officer of the Killoughy Dispensary District, King's County, in defiance of the expressed and conveyed opinion of the members of the Irish Medical Association, and requesting him to reconsider his position; and whether, seeing that in consequence of this resolution Dr. M'Carthy has tendered his resignation, although his appointment had been sanctioned by the Local Government Board, he will state what steps he proposes taking in the matter.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. WYNDHAM, Dover): The resolution has been received. The Local Government Board has suggested to the guardians the propriety of calling upon Dr. M'Carthy to take up at once his duties as medical officer. In the event of his failing to do so the Board will hold a sworn inquiry into the circumstances of the case.

Poor Law Relief in Ireland.

MR. O'SHEE (Waterford, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will grant the Return as to persons in receipt of indoor and outdoor relief in Ireland standing on this day's Paper.

MR. WYNDHAM: The annual reports of the Local Government Board contain a number of statistical tables on this subject. The preparation of the special Return indicated by the hon. Member would entail an immense amount of labour on the part of local authorities, which I hesitate to impose—the more particularly at the present moment, when the Poor Law Commission propose to compile further statistics in the matter.

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† See (4) Debates, cxxv., 1157 and 581.

The following is the return referred to—

Poor Law (Indoor and Outdoor Relief) (Ireland). Return in respect of the persons in receipt of Indoor and Outdoor Relief in Ireland respectively on the 1st day of January, 1903, and at any time during the twelve months ended on the 31st day of March, 1903 (in the same form as Parliamentary Paper, No. 265, for England and Wales, of session 1892).

Irish Department of Agriculture—Clerks' Salaries.

MR. O'KELLY (Mayo, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, whether he is aware that the Department of Agriculture have on their staff a number of clerks with a service of eight years and upwards whose salaries fall short of £100 per year, and whose present rate of yearly increment does not amount to an increase of one shilling per week; and whether, in view of the fact that persons of less experience have since the establishment of the Department been employed at higher salaries to do similar work, he will take steps to have the claims of the clerks in question suitably recognised.

MR. WYNDHAM: I refer the hon. Member to my replies to the similar Questions put to me by the hon. and learned Member for North Louth on the 28th May, 17th June and 7th July.† The Questions asked a number of particulars about two clerks who have been appointed at higher salaries than three existing clerks, to which the three existing clerks object; the answers were to shew (1) that the existing clerks have been well treated in being made permanent with increase of pay instead of temporary; (2) that the new clerks are persons of experience.

Irish Labourers' Grievances.

MR. SHEEHAN (Cork, Co., Mid): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will state what form the inquiry will take during the autumn into the claims of the Irish wage-earning labour population to obtain access to the land and into the Amendments which are necessary to the Labourers (Ireland) Acts; how does he propose to gather evidence as to the requirements of the different provinces; and will he consider the desirability of recommending the appointment of a Viceregal Commission which would go thoroughly into the whole subject.

MR. WYNDHAM: The Local Government Board is already in possession of much information, statistical and otherwise, appertaining to the working of the Labourers Acts. It proposes to supplement this information by special reports from its inspectors throughout the country. I shall direct investigation by any other Departments in a position to contribute pertinent information. No advantage would be gained by the appointment of a Viceregal Commission.

Royal Irish Constabulary and Masonic Meetings.

MR. SHEEHAN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether members of the Royal Irish Constabulary are allowed to attend Freemason meetings; if so, by whom is permission granted; is the day of absence at such meetings counted in their annual leave; and does the fact of being a Freemason secure any special privileges in the police force.

MR. WYNDHAM: Members of the Royal Irish Constabulary are allowed to attend Masonic meetings, provided their absence does not interfere with the performance of their public duties. Leave is not specially asked or granted for such purposes. Every application for leave is made on a prescribed form and is recorded against the applicant. The reply to the concluding inquiry is in the negative.

Irish Land Bill Administration.

MR. O'SHEE: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether it is intended that the Estates Commissioners, in carrying out Clause 92 of the Land Bill, shall have the assistance of one of the inspectors of the Local Government Board who have been engaged at local inquiries under the Labourers' Acts; and, if so, whether he will try to secure some one in more sympathy with the claims of the labourers than many of the Local Government Board inspectors have shown themselves.

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† See (4) Debates, cxxiii., 110 and 1162; cxxiv., 1524.

Mr. WYNDHAM: The provisions of Section 92 do not call for any alteration in the functions of the Local Government Board. The Board will still have to inquire into the merits of the schemes recommended by sanitary authorities in pursuance of Section 94 (2). The Board's inspectors have satisfactorily discharged their duties under the Labourers' Acts and no change is necessitated by the provisions of the Bill in the existing practice of the Board.

Listowel and Ballybunion Railway.

Mr. LUNDON (Limerick, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in view of the fact that the Listowel and Ballybunion Railway Company is at present under the Vice Chancellor's Court, he will say what is the amount of the debt and who are the mortgagees and solicitors having control over the management; to whom can any servant of the company appeal in case there is a grievance; and to whom should the public appeal where it is necessary to call attention to the management or where it is necessary to appeal for through or exceptional rates affecting the district through which the line runs.

Mr. WYNDHAM: The affairs of this company being before the Vice-Chancellor in his judicial capacity, he declines to give any information in respect to it. With reference to the concluding inquiry I presume that any specific complaint by persons aggrieved may be addressed to the Department of Agriculture.

Lough Erne Drainage Charges.

Mr. EDWARD MITCHELL: (Fermanagh, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland what will be the position, under the Land Bill, of landlords now paying drainage charge on their property in connection with Lough Erne drainage and if he will see that such in no way hinders the prospect of landlords selling and tenants buying where such charge is at present levied.

Mr. WYNDHAM: The capital charge will be redeemed in like manner as a superior interest, and the charge for maintenance will remain outstanding and be apportioned amongst the holdings of the purchasers. There is nothing in this to prevent landlords from selling, or tenants from buying holdings liable to the charge.

Mr. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that in some cases this charge equals three-fourths of the rent.

[No answer was returned.]

Limerick County Council Rate.

Mr. O'SHAUGHNESSY (Limerick, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to a resolution passed by the Rathkeale District Council, with a view to having credited to the ratepayers of the parish of Dunmoylan in a future rate to be made by the Limerick County Council the amount of £38 odd, amount of rate of 3¾d. in the £, for a malicious injury case, in which a decree was obtained against ratepayers of Dunmoylan, it having been inserted by mistake in decree for the parish of Kilmoylan; and, if so, whether he will give directions to the Limerick County Council to credit the ratepayers of the parish of Dunmoylan with the sum in the future rate, seeing that it was levied off them owing to a clerical error.

Mr. WYNDHAM: The facts are correctly stated. The matter is not one, however, in which the Government, by administrative action, can remedy the mistake that has been made.

Mr. O'SHAUGHNESSY asked how the ratepayers were to get back the money they had paid under protest, and on the distinct understanding that in a future levy they were to be credited with the overcharge.

Mr. WYNDHAM said he had given the best advice he could.

Arklow Labourer's Cottage.

Mr. JAMES O'CONNOR: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that on the 3rd of June, 1902, after a sworn inquiry had been held at Rathdrum Union, a Provisional Order was issued by the Irish Local Government Board requiring the Rev. Mr. Hallowes, of Arklow, to build and complete a labourer's cottage within twelve months; and, if so, in view of the fact that the Order has not been complied with, will he say what action the Local Government Board propose to take in the matter.

Mr. WYNDHAM: The Rev. Mr. Hallowes undertook to erect a cottage at his own expense on the site proposed to be taken by the District Council. The Provisional Order, which became absolute on the 19th August, 1902, authorised the Council to take the plot compulsorily and to erect a cottage on it if, within twelve months from that date, the owner failed to give effect to his undertaking. The period of twelve months will expire on the 19th promixo, when it will be open to the District Council to exercise the powers conferred upon it by the Provisional Order, should the owner have failed to fulfil his undertaking.

Naas Labourers' Cottage Scheme.

Mr. JAMES O'CONNOR: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can explain the cause of the delay on the part of the Local Government Board in holding a local inquiry into the improvement scheme under the Labourers' Acts passed by the Naas (No. 2) Rural District Council on the 3rd of January last, the petition for the inquiry having been signed on the 2nd of May.

Mr. WYNDHAM: The Local Government Board have not received the scheme referred to, nor any documents connected with it. Consequently they are not in a position to hold an inquiry. The Board will communicate with the District Council on the subject.

Irish Gold Ornaments—Cost of Legal Proceedings.

Mr. WHITLEY (Halifax): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if he can state the total cost of the proceedings relating to the ownership of the Irish gold ornaments; how much of the cost consists of fees to the Law Officers of the Crown; what is the estimated value of the ornaments; and will the Treasury have to pay the costs of both appellants and respondents in the action.

The PRIME MINISTER and FIRST LORD of the TREASURY (Mr. A. J. Balfour, Manchester, E.): The total cost of the proceedings was £3,114 0s. 2d. The fees of the law officers were £595 5s. The amount paid by the British Museum for the ornaments was £600. The Treasury paid the taxed costs of the British Museum, the defendants in the action, amounting to £1,486 12s. 2d.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): May I ask whether this great expenditure would not have been avoided if my advice had been accepted?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not remember to which of his pieces of valuable advice the hon. Member alludes.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND: It was a Bill which I introduced.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not call that advice.

Cost of the Fiscal Inquiry.

Mr. MANSFIELD: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury does the inquiry into the fiscal policy of this country involve the Departments concerned in any additional expense; and, if so, when will the House have an opportunity of discussing the administration of those Departments in relation to the inquiry.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I apprehend there will be no occasion for a supplementary Estimate.

Mr. MANSFIELD: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury will he state which of the Government Departments are directly concerned in the inquiry into the fiscal policy of this country; and will he also say to which Departments information may be sent, and from which Department information can now be given as to the particulars which the Government are anxious to secure evidence upon.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: As I have already mentioned, in answer, I think, to the hon. Member for the Rushcliffe Division,† the Departments concerned are the Board of Trade and the Customs and Inland Revenue. Correspondence on this as on any other subject should, I think, be addressed to the Parliamentary heads of the Departments. As to the third part of the Question, I have nothing to add to previous statements I have made.

Colonial Contributions to Army Expenditure.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if any increase will be proposed in the contribution to Army charges of the Straits, Ceylon, and other colonies towards the increased cost of the pay of the British Army, in respect of which £786,000 per annum is to be charged upon the revenues of India.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Ceylon, the Straits Settlements, Hong-Kong, and Mauritius now pay certain percentages of their revenues towards the cost of the garrisons of those colonies. Those percentages were fixed by agreement, with the concurrence of the Treasury and the War Office, but they are independent of any increase that may be made in the cost of the garrisons.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

MR. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.) asked as to the business to be taken on Friday.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I propose to put down first the Committee stage of the Naval Works Bill, secondly, the Employment of Children Bill, and, thirdly, the Committee stage of the South African Loan Bill. The Motor-Car Bill and the Patriotic Fund Bill will be put down next in order.

SHEEP SCAB BILL.

Reported, with Amendments, from the Standing Committee on Trade, &c.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 282.]

Minutes of the Proceedings of the Standing Committee to be printed [No. 282.]

Bill, as amended (in the Standing Committee), to be considered upon Thursday, and to be printed. [Bill 298.]

NEW MEMBER SWORN.

Arthur Henderson, esquire, for the County of Durham (Barnard Castle Division).

HOUSE OF COMMONS (VENTILATION).

Report from the Select Committee, with Minutes of Evidence, brought up, and read.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 283.]

NEW BILL.

WILD BIRDS' PROTECTION ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

"To amend the Wild Birds' Protection Acts," presented by Mr. Sydney Buxton; supported by Sir John Stirling-Maxwell, Sir Robert Reid, Colonel Lockwood, and Sir Edward Grey; to be read a second time upon Tuesday next, and to be printed. [Bill 299.]

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (GOVERNMENT BUSINESS).

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): I now rise to move, "That, for the remainder of the session, Government business be not interrupted, except at half-past seven of the clock at an afternoon sitting, under the provisions of any Standing Order regulating the sittings of the House, and may be entered upon at any hour though opposed, and that at the conclusion of Government business each day Mr. Speaker do adjourn the House without Question put." This Motion, which is usual towards the end of the session, has been deferred this year, I think, rather later than has been customary within my Parliamentary recollection.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxxv., 415.

It is not a very pleasant thing to suspend the Twelve o'clock Rule, and the House always does it with reluctance. But I may remind hon. Members that, in the first place, it is the happy presage of the end of the session, and, in the second place, that I do not think there has been a year in which the rule has been less interfered with. For the first time we have worked through a complete session under the new rules, and I think it will be admitted, whatever other results may have ensued, that in the first place it has enabled private Members to know precisely when their own Motions would come on, and in the second place it has enabled us to get through the business with which we have had to deal with fewer exceptional Motions of this nature than has ever been known before. I am not aware that up to the present I have had to stand at this table and ask the House to pass any Motion except the Motion for the holidays. This is the first exception to the rule, and it is a necessary and inevitable exception, as everybody will be prepared to admit. I do not think the amount of business I shall ask the House to get through before rising for the holidays is at all beyond what we should be able to do without any undue effort, and it certainly does not equal the calls that have been made upon it, and made successfully, in previous years. The Bills which we must pass before we separate naturally fall into two classes and under two heads or divisions—the class of administrative Bills, and the class of Bills involving policy. And the division is not always perfectly clear cut, because there are some measures which naturally lie on the border land. Still, I think it will be generally convenient if this afternoon I adopt this division.

Now as to the Bills involving policy. The main Bill, the largest and most controversial Bill with which we have got to deal is, of course, the Sugar Convention Bill. I have no reason to believe that that will take any very great amount of Parliamentary time. And I do not think it ought to, partly because it is a Bill merely to carry out treaty obligations, and also because it is a Bill the principle of which the House has already affirmed, and because, too, it is the principle rather than the details which excites the criticism of those who are opposed to the policy. Therefore it is on the Second Reading rather than on the Committee stage of the Bill that the House will desire to have a full and extended debate. The next Bill is that dealing with the employment of children. That is in no sense a Party measure. It is not a measure which has excited any opposition on either side of the House, and there is only a small portion of it that remains to be dealt with. It will not, therefore, throw any burden on our Parliamentary time. The same may be said of the South African Loan Bill, the principle of which was discussed yesterday. It was passed without a division, and I do not imagine that on the later stages of the Bill any questions of a controversial character are likely to arise. The Port of London Bill also deals with policy. I was urged earlier in the session by a right hon. Gentleman sitting on the bench opposite to do all I could to facilitate and secure the passage of that measure, and I have every reason to hope it will pass into law. I believe that a great many, if not all, of the interests that were at one time opposed to one or other aspect of the measure have been conciliated by the changes introduced into it, and I cannot believe it will lead to any very lengthened debate. Perhaps I ought to class as a Bill involving policy, though it is small and quite uncontroversial, the Railways (Electrical Power) Bill. I believe that is practically an agreed Bill, and I only mention it in order that my statement may be as far as possible complete.

Next I come to the administrative measures. The House will recognise that the Naval Works Bill and the Military Works Bill are measures which we must obtain. There is a Bill transferring to the Board of Agriculture the duties connected with fisheries, now carried out by the Board of Trade, which was initiated by the late Mr. Hanbury and my right hon. friend the President of the Board of Trade. I believe it meets with general acceptance, and if that is so I imagine it will pass without any great expenditure of public time. The Irish Development Grant Bill must also pass. It is a consequential measure closely related to the great Bill, soon to become an Act, for facilitating land purchase in Ireland. The greater Act cannot work satisfactorily unless we pass this supplementary measure. There are two small Ecclesiastical Bills, which raise no question of policy or of theology—the Ecclesiastical Commissioners Bill and the Bishoprics of Southwark and Birmingham Bill [OPPOSITION cries of "Oh."] They are purely administrative in character.

MR. WHITLEY (Halifax): Not the second one.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I will not argue the question now, but it seems to me that if hon. Gentlemen will look at the contents of the Bills they will see that my description of them is right. We must also pass other administrative Bills dealing with the building of public offices. One of them is to enable the great public offices now in course of construction to be continued. The other is to carry out the work necessitated by the passage of the Patent Law Amendment Act last year. Further accommodation is required in connection with the Patent Office. I ought, perhaps, to say that this Bill will have to be referred to a hybrid Committee, inasmuch as it is in the nature of a Private Bill, although it is brought in by the Government. There is an unopposed Poor Law (Dissolution of School Districts and Adjustments) Bill, which I think will pass by universal agreement, and there are three measures incident to the end of the session—the Public Works Loan Bill, the Isle of Man Customs Bill, and the Expiring Laws Bill, which I suppose may also pass with universal consent. That concludes the list of measures which must be passed, and though the number sounds considerable the actual time they need take is very inconsiderable. I pass now to the second class of Bills, which I have great hopes the House will pass, but which I recognise cannot be passed if they are to raise any prolonged or continuous discussion. I do not pretend that they are unopposed, but there is a very large measure of agreement about them on both sides of the House, and they ought to pass in the public interest. The first is the Prevention of Corruption Bill; there are quarters from which that Bill has received a considerable amount of criticism, and if that criticism is persisted in I suppose it will be difficult to pass it into law. But there is a great demand for it on the part of the mercantile community, and I should be sorry if it were lost through want of time. Nearly the same expressions may be used with regard to the Adulterated Butter Bill, which excites great interest in the agricultural community. It had at one time a large number of rather formidable opponents, but it has been subjected to a long and searching examination in Grand Committee; I believe the opposing interests have been greatly modified, and that there is a not inconsiderable chance of its meeting with general acceptance from Gentlemen in all quarters of the House. A less important agricultural Bill, rejoicing in the euphonious name of the Sheep Scab Bill, is a small Bill, and, I hope, non-contentious.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): I hope non-contagious, too.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I cannot imagine the subject giving rise to much Parliamentary eloquence, and I hope the Bill will be added to the Statute-book. There is a Bill introduced by the President of the Local Government Board, in obedience to an appeal made to him on the King's Speech, for dealing with certain aspects of the great problem of the housing of the working classes, which I do not think raises any seriously contentious matter. If my right hon. friend is able to convince hon. Members interested in it that it is of the uncontroversial kind which he believes it to be, it might usefully be passed in the course of the present session. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, on one of the earlier stages of the Finance Bill, promised that in the interests of the farmer he would bring in a Bill to abolish the duty on raw molasses, which but for the duty would be used by farmers as a most effective feeding stuff, as it is used in every other country. I think it is really freeing the raw materials of manufacture from taxation, and I hope the House will allow the Bill to pass. I ought to say that the Bill contains a good many other provisions [Mr. GIBSON BOWLES: Hear, hear]; but they are all, I believe, of an uncontroversial character. There is a Bill for legalising certain marriages which have been irregularly performed, which involves no question of general policy whatever, but which would remove a great and pressing hardship from a large number of families in whose interest, I think, the House should pass the Bill. There is a Bill for remodelling the Patriotic Fund, which I hope will prove of an uncontroversial character. I have had, earlier in the year, many communications from Gentlemen on both sides of the House on the subject of carrying out the wishes often expressed by the House in regard to that fund. The Bill is one in which the hon. Member for Devonport has taken great interest, and it may be expected to pass. The Congested Districts (Scotland) Bill is greatly desired by Members representing parts of Scotland in which congestion prevails, and I hope that it will not be opposed, although I understand some opposition is at present threatened. There remains in this class the Motor-car Bill, which we may expect from the House of Lords, where it has been subjected to considerable discussion, very shortly. Undoubtedly that Bill deals with a subject which has raised a great deal of feeling, amounting almost to passion, on both sides, and a Bill of that kind cannot pass unless those deeply interested in the subject will consent to restrain the perfectly legitimate exercise of their debating powers in defence of their own particular views. I quite agree that it is a Bill which would naturally excite a considerable amount of debate; but I fear that if the time for that debate is given to it, it would either prevent other measures, which must be passed, becoming law, or it would unduly prolong the length of the session. I would appeal, very respectfully, to those interested in this subject, whatever their views may be, to remember that by universal consent the present state of the law is eminently unsatisfactory, alike to those who do not use and to those who do use motor-cars. I should regret it if the subject, which though in one sense no doubt is of secondary importance yet raises important questions, should remain unsolved and undealt with until the House re-assembles, and, therefore, I make this appeal to the House. I feel that if the appeal is not listened to sympathetically there is no chance whatever of the Bill passing into law. There is in the House of Lords a Light Railway Bill, of a purely uncontroversial character, which it would be extremely desirable to pass, but which cannot be passed if it is opposed. There is also a Bill which the Lord Chancellor proposes to introduce in the House of Lords, dealing with a difficulty which a recent decision of the Court of Appeal has made in connection with crossed cheques. The Bill only affects bankers, but I am told it is very desirable in their interest that the law should be made what it has always been supposed to be. Though I should never think of pressing that Bill, if it is received as an agreed measure I should not feel precluded from proceeding with it. That completes the list of Government Bills, which we either must pass or hope to pass. We do not expect to pass the Police (Superannuation) Bill, nor the Marine Insurance Bill, much as that is desired in very influential quarters. Neither do we expect to pass the London School Board (Hilldrop Site) Bill, the Electric Light (London) Bill, the Statute Law Revision (Scotland) Bill, the Bankers (Ireland) Act Repeal Bill nor the Justices of the Peace Bill. As to private Bills, at this period of the session, only when a Bill is practically agreed is it possible to put it under the ægis of the Government. There are two such Bills, in which the Scottish Office has been peculiarly interested, the Burgh Police (Scotland) Bill, and the County Council (Scotland) Bill, both of them lengthy measures which absolutely cannot pass except by agreement. I believe they are desired by Scottish Members on both sides, and if that desire carries with it the necessary silence these Bills might also be passed. I do not absolutely exclude the possibility of starring other private Bills if I am convinced of their uncontroversial character, but those are the only two at present, I believe, that come under that description. I forgot to mention that in the first class of Bills there were three uncontroversial measures. The first is the Naval Works (Portsmouth Barracks Site) Bill.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: That is ecclesiastical.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: It is only ecclesiastical in the sense that a church is to be sold. The other is a Bill to set free certain funds which already are awaiting investment provided from the sale of land at Battersea Park. The third is the Borough Funds Bill, already agreed to by the House of Lords with one Amendment. I have now completed my task, and I believe on examination it will be found that the programme is in no sense too heavy or considerable for the time that now remains at our disposal. I hope the House will be able to get through it without trenching upon its legitimate holidays, and without deferring the time when we usually separate. I beg to move.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That, for the remainder of the session, Government Business be not interrupted, except at half-past Seven of the clock at an Afternoon Sitting, under the provisions of any Standing Order regulating the Sittings of the House, and may be entered upon at any hour, though opposed, and that at the conclusion of Government Business each day Mr. Speaker do adjourn the House without Question put."—(*Mr. A. J. Balfour.*)

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: The right hon. Gentleman seems to have made the sort of statement that would have been made by Mark Tapley if he had attained to the position of being Leader of the House. The right hon. Gentleman has named some thirty-five Bills, and the number which he has condemned to death is very few indeed. There are twenty Bills which the right hon. Gentleman says must be passed, and a great many others that will be passed if the House is kind towards them. The right hon. Gentleman has shown himself altogether too hopeful. He has named a number of measures which will undoubtedly occupy a great deal of time. Fully recognising, as I do, the necessity of dealing with the question of motor-cars, I do not think we can anticipate that in any case a Bill for that purpose can go through the House without a considerable expenditure of time. Then there is the Port of London Bill, which will require also a good deal of time. Moreover the right hon. Gentleman has not referred to the further stages of the Irish Land Bill, when it comes from the House of Lords, the Scotch Licensing Bill, and the London Education Bill, which may be amended in another place. The right hon. Gentleman has taken credit for the position in which he finds himself, and especially for having avoided more than usual the suspension of the Twelve o'clock Rule, and he claimed credit for the action of the new rules. But these new rules are still left in a truncated and indeterminate form, and I would like to know for how many sessions they are to remain dangling on the Notice Paper, relics of a past controversy—chronic, but still existing. Then there is the Morgan combination and the Cunard subsidy, for which time was promised; and there are also the Indian Budget and the statement the right hon. Gentleman promised to make on the subject of legislation for the purpose of compensating publicans. If there is to be a statement there must be a peg on which to hang it.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I said I would be glad to answer a Question on the subject before the end of the session.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: That eases my anticipation so far as that goes; but some indignant partisan may proceed to move the adjournment for the purpose of discussing the right hon. Gentleman's answer. In my opinion, the right hon. Gentleman's programme of Bills is altogether out of the question. It is also suggested to me that Question may be asked of the right hon. Gentleman on the subject of the fiscal policy. The prospect, therefore, is not so rosy as it has been presented by the right hon. Gentleman. We have not been told when the House is likely to rise. There are certain days of Supply still before the right hon. Gentleman, and he has also the Appropriation Bill to provide for, and all the measures which he says must pass, as well as the measures he says he hopes to pass. I do not think that this is a serious massacre. I think the right hon. Gentleman will have to harden his heart and abandon a great many more measures before the real business of the House for the rest of the session can be said to have been settled. I do not think the right hon. Gentleman has much to complain of in the attitude and conduct of the House this session. There has been no waste of time, and no undue prolongation of debate, or any of the other evils of which a Leader of the House often complains. Therefore, the right hon. Gentleman ought not to attempt to crowd into the last fortnight of the session such a great catalogue of measures as he has indicated.

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) said he did not intend to make any appeal to his right hon. friend, but he wished to make one or two representations in regard to portions of his statement. His right hon. friend informed the House that the very serious matter of the Licensing Bill, introduced by his hon. friend, would be the subject of a statement by itself. His right hon. friend had not, however, told the House whether he would give any facilities for that Bill. He must be well aware that it excited very great interest; and although it was the fashion nowadays to relegate everything to an inquiry, he thought this was a matter which demanded consideration. With regard to the Sugar Bill, his right hon. friend claimed for it special indulgence, because he said that the principle was affirmed by a Resolution previously passed; but he would remind his right hon. friend that the Resolution was affirmed by the House on a false translation of the Convention. The falsity of the translation was subsequently admitted, and a new copy was circulated which the House had not seen when it agreed to the Resolution. Moreover the short and altogether inadequate debate on that false translation was made shorter by the Closure. With regard to the Irish Development Grant Bill, the right hon. Gentleman seemed to think that it would pass as a matter of course. He could assure his right hon. friend that the Bill raised such a serious constitutional principle, and there were such serious constitutional objections to it, that he might anticipate considerable discussion upon it. With regard to the Revenue Bill to be introduced, so far as he could see there was not anything objectionable in it; but it was all matter which ought to have been introduced in the Finance Bill. The alterations, proper as they might be, should not be introduced in a separate Bill, but in the Finance Bill, in accordance with precedent. With regard to the Motor-Car Bill, he would say that if the law were unsatisfactory, the conduct of a great many motorists was also extremely unsatisfactory. There again the limits of speed, or whether they should be any limit, would take a considerable time to discuss. The right hon. Gentleman opposite mentioned the Morgan Agreement; but there was a much more important agreement than that, and that was the Cunard Agreement, which involved something like £5,500,000 sterling. They had had promise after promise that that matter would be discussed before it was finally carried into effect. The right hon. Gentleman had the optimism to claim credit for his new rules on the ground that private Members now knew when their Motions would come on. Alas! they did. Before Easter the coat of the private Member was removed; after Easter his waistcoat was taken away; and after Whitsun the rest of his garments were removed. Private Members knew that their Motions never came on; and they had no such sense of consolation as the right hon. Gentleman seemed to suppose. It appeared to him that on this occasion the right hon. Gentleman had far less justification for taking the whole of the time of the House and suspending the Twelve o'clock Rule than any Minister ever had in any previous session. The right hon. Gentleman had taken all the time of the House to the exclusion of the one particular subject the House desired to discuss. The Prime Minister now at the end of the session came down with a list of thirty-eight or thirty-nine Bills which he expected the House to pass, and left the House, apparently to his own satisfaction int he humiliating position of being the only place on God's earth where the subject uppermost in all men's minds could not and would not be discussed. He would rather find time for discussion on that matter than the Sheep Scab Bill, the Congested Districts (Scotland) Bill, and some others. The House had lost much interest for people outside, and some of it, he thought, for the right hon. Gentleman himself, for he did not attend it so often as they should desire to see him. [MINISTERIAL cries of "Oh."] Those hon. Members who murmured could not themselves have been often there. He hoped this would be remedied, and that if these thirty-eight or thirty-nine Bills were to be passed they would be assisted in their debate by the right hon. Gentleman himself. The right hon. Gentleman, he supposed, must have the time he asked for, as this was usual at that period of the session, and he would not therefore vote against the proposal.

SIR F. DIXON-HARTLAND (Middlesex, Uxbridge) said he had no doubt that the Prime Minister would remember that the Port of London Bill was put down to pass its Second Reading on the understanding that time would be given for its being thoroughly threshed out in Committee. What had taken place? There was a feeling of very great indignation that the Bill had been rushed through in Committee, that witnesses who had tendered themselves for examination had neither been called nor heard, and that the matter had not been properly discussed. The City of London, the Thames Conservancy, the shippers, the wharfingers, the watermen, the dockers, and all those who had interests in the Bill were indignant at the way in which it had been treated, and appealed that it should be deferred till next session, when it could be properly discussed. There was no doubt it was a Bill of the very greatest importance to the City of London, and it was a Bill upon which the whole future of the Port of London depended; and if, by any error made now, the Port was made a dear port, a great deal of the wealth of this City would disappear. It was not a Bill that should be forced through after a few hours discussion. The feeling was most strong that this Bill, which was a most necessary one, did not meet the views of any of the parties concerned, and therefore he hoped time would be given for its discussion next session.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean) expressing general concurrence in the strictures of the hon. Member for King's Lynn, expressed surprise that they were not to be followed up by his vote against the Motion. As the hon. Gentleman pointed out, the list of measures put down as being necessary, and which must pass, included a large number of Bills not usually included at this period of the session, and included a far greater number of Bills than was ever submitted at this time of the year. He agreed also with his hon. friend, and a large section of the House would also agree, that the House ought hardly to be called upon to give facilities for the passing of such a long list of measures, looking at the way in which the Government were burking discussion on the fiscal issue, an issue on which the Government themselves had asked the judgment of the House and for which they had refused to give facilities. The Prime Minister had not even told them when the House would rise, if the facilities he asked were given, as was usual when such Motions were made.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR denied that any Prime Minister had ever done that.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE thought it would be found that it had not only been done always, but that it had often been done twice in the session; but certainly on this Motion it had always been the practice for the Leader of the House to make a statement of when he would be able to wind up the business of the House. The nature of the legislation the House would be asked to pass during the remainder of the session was also deserving of stricture. Some of them were the less inclined to grant facilities because they felt a good deal of bitterness about recent legislation which had proceeded on reactionary lines. Three highly controversial measures for which the whole time of the House ought not to be asked were two Bishopric Bills and the Ecclesiastical Commissioners Bill.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I only mentioned two of them.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE said then they now understood that one of the Bishopric Bills was to be dropped. Then it was proposed to go forward with a Bill dealing with the great question of housing, and putting off those who desired that this question might be disposed of by doing some things which were desirable to be done, but also, as everyone knew perfectly well, putting off a larger solution for over three or four years.

MR. CHARLES McARTHUR (Liverpool, Exchange) made an appeal to the right hon. Gentleman the Prime Minister to give facilities for the passing of the Marine Insurance Bill, a non-contentious measure to simplify and codify the law of marine insurance. It had been before Parliament now for nine years, and had secured the approval of every Committee it had been sent before. The whole shipping and mercantile community desired this Bill, and he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would give such facilities as would ensure its passing into law this session. Why was it not to be passed into law? The measure had unfortunately found an opponent in the hon. Member for Mid Lanark, who had put down a number of Amendments which under ordinary circumstances might be taken as intended to wreck the Bill. The hon. Member, however, said that he desired to be satisfied that the Bill, if passed, would work. If that were so, why not send the Bill to the Grand Committee on Trade, where it could be examined, and every opportunity afforded for the consideration of Amendments? It was not right that a Bill of this kind, desired by the whole commercial community, and approved of by the highest law officers in the country, should be prevented from passing by the opposition of one Member. He hoped the Government would reconsider this matter, and if possible transfer the Bill from the list in which it had been placed to a position in which it would have some chance of passing into law.

Mr. CALDWELL (Lanarkshire, Mid) said the Bill to which the hon. Member referred was a codification of the Marine Insurance law, which for 800 years had been common law, based on principles which had given universal satisfaction. It was now to be changed into statute law, the delicacy of which procedure every Member of the House knew. The whole thing was to be put into the melting pot, and the statute law would have to be interpreted by itself. The difficulty of the matter might be judged from the fact that Bills were introduced in the House of Lords and amended in 1894, 1895, 1896, 1897, 1898 and 1899, but Lord Herschell, the parent of the measure, would not take the responsibility of passing it even through that assembly. The Bill was again introduced, and amended in 1901, 1902 and this year, and now the House of Commons was asked, practically without discussion, to place upon the Statute-book a measure which would materially alter the whole construction of the law relating to marine insurance. He had said sufficient to show that the Bill was not so simple a measure as had been represented, and that it ought, at any rate, to be examined by a Select Committee of experts before being passed into law.

LORD HUGH CECIL (Greenwich) desired to point out to the Prime Minister that many hon. Members behind him would feel a certain difficulty in supporting him upon the present occasion. His right hon. friend had reflected with natural complacency on the working of the new rules. In many respects those rules had worked admirably, but the Leader of the House had not commented on the fact that they gave to the Government of the day an almost boundless control over the time of the House—a control which had certainly been used in a manner altogether unparalleled in the history of Parliament. The matter was relevant to the present discussion, because a Motion such as that before the House was defensible only on the hypothesis that deliberation in the House of Commons was a desirable thing. If all that was wanted was to get through a certain amount of business, all the Bills enumerated by his right hon. friend could easily be carried if the House abstained from any discussion whatever. The justification of the Motion, therefore, was that deliberation by the House of Commons was useful in the public interest. How could his right hon. friend, with any consistency, maintain such a thesis as that? If deliberation was useful, it was surely as useful in more important as in less important matters. If measures of a departmental and administrative character were to be deliberated upon, why not a fiscal policy which was to revolutionise the whole fiscal system of the country?

He was aware that his right hon. friend had said elsewhere that even he could not discuss this question within the walls of the House of Commons, and that the House of Commons ought to discuss only definite proposals upon which they were to come to definite decisions. But if such declarations were to apply to questions of first-class importance, it was clear that the House of Commons would never be allowed to discuss matters until discussion had become superfluous, because in a democratic country questions of first-class importance were decided by the country at large. This very question was admittedly to be decided by the country at large; and it had been expressly stated that no proposal would be made until after a General Election, and then, forsooth, the House of Commons were to be allowed to discuss it! After everything had been settled, they were to have their little chatter and pass by. After the verdict had been delivered, there would be time to listen to the arguments! The Government in moving this Motion were hardly in a consistent position, but he was not at all surprised that they should prefer inconsistency to the inconveniences which would attach to the more logical course. He was not at all surprised that they should shrink from the preliminary discussion which he felt very confident indeed would result in showing the fallacy of the proposals that had been indicated. Never was a discussion wanted more than now, when on every hand there were signs of some modifications in the proposals; when some supporters of what was called by the Birmingham leaflets "the Chamberlain policy" were evidently in full retreat and were assuring the country that there was to be no taxation of food, or, at any rate, little taxation of food—so little as to be insignificant—seeking in that policy protection from obloquy, which was the chief privilege of insignificance. Never more than now was an opportunity needed for clearing up these ambiguities. He confessed that when he saw a great number of persons putting forward various modifications of what was believed to be the Colonial Secretary's policy, when he heard many recommending that much more was to be taxed, and others recommending that much less was to be taxed, he remembered the lines—

> "But those behind cried 'Forward,'
> And those before cried 'Back;'
> And backward now and forward
> Wavers the deep array;
> And on the tossing sea of steel
> To and fro the standards reel,
> And the victorious trumpet's peal.
> Dies fitfully away."

But it was of course impossible to persuade the Government, or the Leader of the House, that a discussion on this great question was a proper matter for the House of Commons. They had to go and listen in another place when they wanted to hear the subject discussed, and when they got there they were very well satisfied. The condemnation that ranged from the House of Lords to the miners of Durham was satisfactory enough for them. Therefore their feelings were a great deal less heated than they were a few days ago, when the issue seemed more doubtful than at present. Nevertheless he thought it right to say that it was not they who shrank from this discussion; they were anxious to have it, but if they were refused it in the future as they had been in the past, there could be but one inference to be drawn from it, and that was, that the authors of the policy knew that it would not stand the criticism that they were willing and anxious to offer.

Mr. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland) protested against the manner in which Scotch business had been neglected during the session. Scotch affairs had received practically no attention whatever, and the one Scotch Bill in regard to the passage of which the Prime Minister held out hope was given a very low place in the list. There might be some hon. Members who wished to discuss this measure, but it was not fair to those representing the congested districts in Scotland that this Bill should be brought in at this period of the session, when hon. Members were told that if they ventured to discuss matters which were of the most vital importance there would be no chance whatever of carrying the measure into law this session. This measure ought to have been introduced months ago, and it should have been discussed upon its merits. It was a Bill which they urgently desired for the relief of the congested districts, and it was a cruel wrong that the poor people should not receive the assistance they were entitled to have from the Congested Districts Board. The will was there and the money was there, and there was nothing but the incapacity of the Government that was preventing this measure becoming law. With regard to the Motor-Car Bill, those who took an interest in that measure knew that it was one of the most essential measures for the safety of the public. They all knew how unjustifiably the public roads were being monopolised at the present moment, how the local authorities were laughed at, and how the police were accused of being spies and informers for simply carrying out their duty. They knew very well the state of affairs in Scotland as well as in England with regard to the gross abuse of their public roads, and matters had been allowed to slide while the time of the House had been occupied with purely academic discussions.

MR. DALZIEL (Kirkcaldy Burghs) said he rose to give hon. Members who desired it an opportunity of discussing the fiscal policy of the country. He wished to propose as an Amendment, after the word "session," in line 2, to add the words "except on such days as may be set apart for the discussion of fiscal policy." It appeared to him that there was at all events almost a unanimous desire that there should be a discussion of their fiscal policy. Both sides of the House were desirous of inquiry and discussion, and if the Government saw their way to afford an opportunity for the discussion of any Resolution they desired to submit with regard to this matter, they ought to be allowed to do it. On that account it was desirable that they should, on the present occasion, not bar themselves from any concession that might be made by the Government with regard to this matter. Why the Government should object to this Amendment he did not know, because he thought the right hon. Gentleman would recognise that they ought to have such a discussion without making it a Party question, and this Amendment would allow the Government an opportunity of putting forward such a Resolution as they might think proper, or an opportunity of accepting any Resolution put on the Paper provided they were of opinion that it was a Resolution which the House ought to discuss. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would accept this Amendment, because he was sure there was a general desire to have a discussion on this very important matter before the session closed. Such a discussion had taken place in another place, and he thought it would be recognised that this question ought to be discussed not as a Party question or as a Vote of Censure on the Government. He begged to move his Amendment.

MR. COURTENAY WARNER (Staffordshire, Lichfield) seconded the Amendment, and said he hoped they would agree to allow an opportunity for discussing this most important subject, which was likely to be the demarcation of Parties in future times.

Amendment proposed—

"In line 2, after the word 'session' to insert the words 'except on such days as may be set apart for the discussion of fiscal policy.'"—(*Mr. Dalziel.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not quite follow the reasoning of my hon. friend. He desires that there should be a discussion of the fiscal question before the end of the session, and he proposes to obtain it by saying that it is to be limited to those days. There is nothing in the hon. Member's Amendment binding the Government, or even suggesting to the Government that they should give those days for discussing the fiscal policy, and if the hon. Member's Amendment were carried he would be no nearer obtaining the discussion he desires. All he would secure is that on any day on which such discussion did take place, we should all separate at twelve o'clock. I do not see how that would further his general wish for a discussion. I do not know whether I should be in order in discussing the advantages or the disadvantages of having a debate on this question. My noble friend who spoke earlier gave expression to his views on this topic, but he appears to have been labouring under a very great misapprehension as to what has been the practice of Parliamentary procedure in matters of this kind. My noble friend says very truly that Parliament exists largely for the purpose of discussion, by which he means, and I mean, that the debates which take place in the House of Commons are essentially a part of our functions, and very greatly conduce to the sober and wise settlement of the various questions brought before it. So far my noble friend and I entirely agree; but we separate when we go a little further into detail, because my noble friend thinks that provided a subject is one which occupies public attention, it immediately becomes fit and ripe for Parliamentary discussion, and Parliamentary discussion is immediately required in order that people's minds may be made up and the country may come to an immediate decision. That would be quite right if the country was asked to come to any such decision, and if it was obvious on what precise point.

LORD HUGH CECIL: Will the House have a chance of discussing this matter before Parliament is dissolved?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: If you ask me my opinion I think it will have an opportunity, but in that respect I may be wrong. I will come to that portion of the noble Lord's argument. It is not for me to pledge either myself or my colleagues on such a matter, but probably the House will have that opportunity. However this may be I challenge the new version, or the more detailed version, of doctrine laid before the House by my noble friend. I do not admit that every Parliament has to discuss the programme which is to be laid before its successors, nor has that ever been accepted as a constitutional practice. What would have been thought of the lunatic who suggested that it was improper to dissolve the Parliament that assembled in 1892 without its having a full opportunity of discussing the Newcastle Programme? It is absurd. My noble friend has the credit of inventing an entirely new constitutional doctrine, and one to which I can give no countenance. Of course, during the period private Members have allotted to discussion it is quite open to any private Member to put down a Resolution dealing with this subject, but to come to the Government and say—"It is true that you have no policy and that you have got no propositions to which you are committed and on which you are going to make proposals either this session or next session or any other session; nevertheless, although you have not put forward these definite proposals to embody your fiscal policy still the question has been raised, it has caused great excitement and interest in the country, and you are bound to have miscellaneous discussions." That seems to me to be a preposterous demand in the first instance, and it becomes doubly preposterous when the Government have declared, with, I believe, the assent of the majority on this side of the House, and of the country, that this is a subject deserving of inquiry, and an inquiry is going on. I know my hon. friends behind me who cheer are conscious that they are in possession of such clear cut and distinct views and such a wide range of knowledge on this subject that they have not got to consider nor to wait for information. And they are conscious, I am sure without the slightest touch of personal pride, that they have a great many important things to say to the House and to the country, which it would be infinitely for the benefit of the souls of Gentlemen in this House and of the public at large that they should immediately have an opportunity of saying. They are not content to say these things upon the platform, or to take any other method which is open to every citizen of a free country. I do not quarrel with them; I can only say I do not agree with them. I am prepared, at all events, to admit that by one of those happy intuitions my hon. friends have reached at once the heart of the truth, and they demand no inquiry, no investigation, and no time to make up their minds. But I belong to a duller and slower generation. I think it would be for the advantage of the House to have the views of the Government before they criticise them. I know my noble friend is anxious to criticise them before he has them.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! It is only competent for the right hon. Gentleman to discuss, on the Amendment, the question of an opportunity being given for discussion, and the time when it should be given. Neither the merits of having an inquiry nor of a fiscal policy can be discussed now any more than the merits of any Bill.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I need not say, Sir, I fully accept your ruling. I thought I was confining myself to the propriety of a discussion in this House and the reasons why I think it is inconvenient to have a discussion while the inquiry is going on. I apologise to you, Sir, and to the House for having travelled beyond the due bounds of order. Whether the inquiry is right or wrong, the inquiry is going on; and I do not think that this is a question upon which discussion ought to take place in this House, for this among other reasons—that it would be impossible for members of the Government to speak for the Government, or at all events it would be impossible for them to formulate views representing the opinions of the Government, while the inquiry is going on. That surely stands to reason. [Laughter.] Hon. Gentlemen laugh as if I had revealed a new truth. I therefore do not in any way retreat from the position I have systematically taken up, which is, that it is not a convenient moment to have a discussion, and I do not think the time of the House could be usefully employed in it. There are some Gentlemen who have a desire to put the Government in a difficulty by having a debate prematurely sprung upon the House and the country, and there are other Gentlemen, more amiably constituted, who are merely desirous of expressing views which they are convinced are of inestimable value to the House and the country. I do not dissent from the last proposition, but I have no sympathy with those who think that this is a desirable moment to have a debate in order to see what the Government say, although the Government have admitted that they are inquiring. It is a mere Party move, of which I do not complain, but which I am not such a fool as to give in to. When the tactics are so obvious as they are in this case he must be a very poor strategist who allows himself to be taken in by them. I think in the circumstances the hon. Gentleman will feel that although his Amendment, so far as it goes, is innocuous, and positively inoperative, it is one which, if carried, would not help his object or improve the Motion before the House. I hope either that the hon. Member will withdraw the Amendment or that the House will reject it. I do not believe that anything would be gained by adopting it, and I am perfectly certain that there will be a far better chance of this matter being dealt with in the sober and serious spirit in which it ought to be dealt with if we avoid throwing it down prematurely on the floor of the House, to be worried by the hon. Gentlemen whose characteristics I have endeavoured to describe.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: It seems to me that the ingenious argument of the right hon. Gentleman may be disposed of by one fact. He poses as the bewildered head of an innocent Government, who see the public mind disturbed but do not desire to have the time of Parliament occupied by a number of people who have made up their minds in a certain way on the question of the fiscal policy of the country, and who wish to have an opportunity of taking the opinion of the House of Commons upon it, or, at all events, of bringing their opinions before the House of Commons. Who is it that has brought this question before the country? The right hon. Gentleman says the Government have no opinion. We know they have none. We know that he has no opinion at all, and that his colleagues have no joint or consolidated opinion. But the matter has been spontaneously, and even wantonly, brought before the country by a colleague of the right hon. Gentleman. The author of that movement, and the right hon. Gentleman opposite also, must have been aware that the moment it was brought forward, in the authoritative manner in which it was announced, it must supersede all other questions and demand almost the whole attention of Parliament and of the country. The right hon. Gentleman has himself in this House listened to a speech by the Colonial Secretary in which he propounded a doctrine of the most explicit character, and of a character that cannot be withdrawn or modified without very serious results. We have heard it said that the Empire would go to pieces unless we had preferential duties, which would involve the taxation of food. Are we to be told that it is not the fault of the Government that they are being interrupted in their peaceful conduct of the affairs of the session by noisy people interested in this fiscal question ? The right hon. Gentleman told us that the Government were inquiring into this question, and while they were inquiring nobody was to be allowed to discuss it. That excuse will not hold water, because, as I have said, it it is his own colleague who has unauthoritatively made a statement as to his conduct at the next election and has absolutely invited the discussion of this House upon it. We are told that it is to be the issue at the next election, and we want to know, first of all, what the issue is. We have not yet obtained that information, and we wish to obtain it by discussing the authoritative statement which the Colonial Secretary has made. The right hon. Gentleman says this is a mere Party move, and he is not such a fool as to give way to it. I think I can retort upon him in that respect. He says, "If you wish for a discussion, bring forward a Motion of want of confidence. Then I will give you a day." Well, that proposal is a Party move, and nobody here is such a fool as to agree to it. He has been aware all along, and anyone who is acquainted with the ordinary procedure of Parliament is aware, that any division in this House on this subject would be a misleading division if the Government exercised their power over their supporters. It is undesirable to start this controversy with a false move here; it would mislead the people of the country, and the people throughout the world, as to the real feeling of the House of Commons, and therefore we have resisted the tempting proposal that the right hon. Gentleman has made. But a discussion of another kind, such as the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for the Colonies invited and urged the House to have on this subject, would have done nothing but clear the air, satisfy the public mind, and lead to the formation of a better estimate of what the people of this country really think on the subject.

SIR JOHN GORST (Cambridge University) said his noble friend the Member for Greenwich had made an appeal to the Prime Minister on behalf of certain young members of the Unionist Party, but he would like to make a very short and temperate appeal to the right hon. Gentleman on behalf of the older members of that Party. They were holding no strange and revolutionary doctrines. They were simply adhering to the fiscal principles which had been the principles first of the Conservative Party and afterwards of the Unionist Party during the whole lifetime of anyone now present in Parliament. If there was a real discussion and inquiry going on on behalf of the Government as a whole, they might hold their tongues and await the result of that inquiry. If every member of the Government used the same language as that used by the noble Duke, the Leader of their Party in another place, they would be able, with perfect self-possession and self-contentment to await the result of this inquiry, which no doubt certain members of the Government were engaged in prosecuting. But there was one member of the Government who was not inquiring, and who not only was not inquiring but was not observing that reserve which they were asked to observe while the inquiry was going on. It was now more than two months since one of the most prominent and active members of the Government laid down proposals, not of a perfectly clear and distinct character in detail but showing perfectly clearly what his policy was; and these proposals had never to this day been accepted or rejected by the Government to which they looked for guidance and leading. But that was not all. At the present moment an active propaganda was being carried on in every constituency in the country by people who would not hold their tongues while the inquiry was going on, but were now engaged in endeavouring to persuade the members of their Party in every constituency in the country to adopt certain fiscal principles which were contrary to those held by their Party for the last fifty or sixty years.—[Cries of "No."] Those who held the old fiscal principles of the Party were denounced as traitors and as rebels against the Party.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The right hon. Gentleman cannot enter into the question of fiscal policy, which does not arise. This is a very limited Amendment to a limited Motion.

SIR JOHN GORST said he knew he was out of order and he apologised; but he had been drawn astray by the interruptions of hon. Gentlemen behind him. He was giving reasons why certain Members of this House, including his noble friend the Member for Greenwich, were eager for discussion; and he wished to say to the Prime Minister that the reason why certain Members of his Party, who were not the least devoted and loyal to that Party, had been asking him to give time for discussion was in order to clear up the anomalous situation to which the utterances of the Colonial Secretary had given rise. It was not they who were to blame for the necessity for an inquiry. It was not they who were to blame for the demand for discussion. It was the member of the Government who was not inquiring at all; who had expressed in that House his deliberate convictions and had even sneered at the Government for having inquired at all. [Interruption]. It was because of the course which that member of the Government was taking in agitating among the constituencies and denouncing all those members of his own Party—[MINISTERIAL cries of "No, No" and "Withdraw"]—it was on that account that they desired and appealed for an opportunity of having this matter cleared up in the House of Commons before the House adjourned and hon. Members were dismissed to their constituents without knowing what they were going to do or say as to the direction in which the Government were going.

SIR WILFRID LAWSON (Cornwall, Camborne) said he would make one suggestion to the Prime Minister which would remove all difficulties—viz., to have an autumn session, to be devoted entirely to a discussion of the Colonial Secretary.

LORD HUGH CECIL said he did not at all complain of his right hon. friend's reply. He was quite sufficiently acquainted with that right hon. Gentleman's oratory to know that when he had recourse to chaff he had no case. He wished to call attention to what was said by a member of the Government in another place. The Duke of Devonshire on 29th June said—

"I would just remind the House——"

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! The noble Lord is quoting from a discussion which took place in the House of Lords this session, and that is not in order.

LORD HUGH CECIL: I am quoting from a discussion in another place.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): Say it.

LORD HUGH CECIL said he could not recite it. What was said in the course of discussion in another place was —

"I would just remind the House that I do not think that any member of the Government has spoken of this question in the sense of being a mere inquiry. The expression which I certainly used, and which I think other members of the Government have employed, was 'inquiry and discussion.'"

(Cries of "Order!")

*MR. SPEAKER: That is quite irrelevant to the question before the House. That has reference to the inquiry, which is not the point before the House. The hon. Member is now making use of the opportunity of quoting what was said in another place dealing with the question of inquiry, and that is not in order.

MR. THEODORE TAYLOR (Lancashire, Radcliffe) said that the right hon. the Prime Minister had stated in the course of the debate that it had never been the rule to discuss a policy or proposal in one Parliament that was to be introduced in another. He begged to remind the right hon. Gentleman that Mr. Gladstone submitted to this House, in 1868, Resolutions on the Irish Church question. Mr. Gladstone was not then Prime Minister, although he was chief of the majority in the House for the time being, so that the principle, though not exactly in form quite the same, applied to the course proposed to be taken that day. The Prime Minister was sarcastic in referring to his young men who had settled convictions on certain questions, but he did not think that it was any reproach whatever, that on a subject of cardinal importance men who had been studying the fiscal history of their country should have settled convictions. [Interruption.]

*MR. SPEAKER: The hon. Member will see that he is not in order, and that he is now entering on a new question.

MR. THEODORE TAYLOR said he begged Mr. Speaker's pardon if he were out of order. He had only been following hon. Members on the other side of the House. He would not wilfully diverge for one moment by a hairsbreadth from questions which had been previously debated. He had only been referring to the fact that the proposed debate seemed to be called for because it seemed to him to be reasonable, and the subject ripe for discussion. The emergency of the case was because the country at large, and more particularly the Party opposite, hoped that they were going to have the guidance which they had a right to expect. But they had had no promise that day that they would have any deliverance from the Government before the recess as to the policy which they intended to pursue. The discussion on general lines of policy in the country ought to be inaugurated by a discussion in this House. He supported the Amendment because it did indicate the direction in which the majority of the House and of the country desired the discussion to take place.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 97; Noes, 194. (Division List No. 193.)

AYES.

Allen, Chas. P. (*Glos., Stroud*)
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Atherley-Jones, L.
Barlow, John Emmott
Bayley, Thomas (*Derbyshire*)
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Brigg, John
Broadhurst, Henry
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Causton, Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Channing, Francis Allston
Davies, Alfred (*Carmarthen*)
Davies, M. Vaughan (*Cardigan*
Dewar, John A. (*Inverness-sh.*)
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Douglas, Charles M. (*Lanark*
Duncan, J. Hastings
Dunn, Sir William
Elibank, Master of
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (*Leith*
Foster, Sir Walter (*Derby Co.*
Fuller, J. M. F.
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert J.
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Sir Wm.
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-
Hayter, Rt. Hn. Sir Arthur D.
Henderson, Arthur (*Durham*)
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hope, John Deans (*Fife, West*)
Horniman, Frederick John
Hutchinson, Dr. Charles Fredk.
Jacoby, James Alfred
Joicey, Sir James
Jones, David Brynmor (*Swansea*
Jones, William (*Carnarvonsh.*)
Kearley, Hudson E.
Labouchere, Henry
Lambert, George
Langley, Batty
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (*Cornwall*)
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, David
Lough, Thomas
M'Arthur, William (*Cornwall*
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Mappin, Sir Fredk. Thorpe
Mitchell, Edw (*Fermanagh, N.*)
Morley, Rt. Hn. John (*Montrose*
Moulton, John Fletcher
Nannetti, Joseph P.
Palmer, Sir Charles M (*Durham*
Partington, Oswald
Paulton, James Mellor
Pickard, Benjamin
Price, Robert John
Rea, Russell
Reid, Sir R. Threshie (*Dumfries*
Roberts, John Bryn (*Eifion*)
Roberts, John H. (*Denbighsh.*)
Robertson, Edmund (*Dundee*)
Robson, William Snowdon
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Thomas (*Hawick, B.*)
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (*Forfarshire*)
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Spencer, Rt. Hn C. R (*Northants*
Taylor, Theodore C. (*Radcliffe*)
Thomas, David Alfred (*Merthyr*
Thomas, F. Freeman- (*Hastings*)
Thomson, F. W. (*York, W.R.*)
Tomkinson, James
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Ure, Alexander
Wallace, Robert
Walton, J. Lawson (*Leeds, S.*)
Wason, Eugene (*Clackmannan*
Wason, John Cathcart (*Orkney*
Weir, James Galloway
White, Luke (*York, E.R.*)
Whitley, J. H. (*Halifax*)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wilson, Chas. H. (*Hull, W.*)
Wilson, H. J. (*York, W. R.*)
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Dalziel and Mr. Warner.

NOES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hn. Sir H.
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (*Manch'r*
Balfour, Capt. C. B. (*Hornsey*)
Balfour, Rt Hn Gerald W. (*Leeds*
Balfour, Kenneth R. (*Christch*
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benj.
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bignold, Arthur

Blundell, Colonel Henry
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Bowles, Lt.-Col H. F (*Middlesex*
Carew, James Laurence
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, R. F. (*N. Lancs.*)
Cavendish, V. C. W. (*Derbyshire*
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Cecil, Evelyn (*Aston Manor*)
Chamberlain, Rt Hon J (*Birm*
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J A (*Worc*
Chaplin, Right Hon. Henry
Chapman, Edward
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Charles Ready
Colston, Chas. Edw H. Athole
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Corbett, T. L. (*Down, North*)
Cranborne, Viscount
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Cust, Henry John C
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Dickson, Charles Scott
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Dorington, Rt. Hon. Sir J. E.
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers
Doxford, Sir Wm. Theodore
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Dyke, Rt. Hon. Sir Wm. Hart
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Faber, George Denison (*York*)
Fardell, Sir T. George
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Ed.
Fergusson, Rt Hn. Sir J. (*Man'r*
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Flower, Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster, P. S. (*Warwick, S. W.*
Fyler, John Arthur
Gardner, Ernest
Gibbs, Hn A. G. H (*City of Lond*
Gibbs, Hn. Vicary (*St. Albans*
Godson, Sir Augustus Fredk.
Gordon, Hn. J. E. (*Elgin & Nrn*
Gore, Hn G. R. C. Ormsby (*Salop*
Gore, Hon. S. F. Ormsby (*Linc.*)
Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Gray, Ernest (*West Ham*)
Greene, Henry D. (*Shrewsbury*)
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Hain, Edward
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hamilton, Rt Hn Ld. G. (*Midx*
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Haslam, Sir Alfred S.
Hatch, Ernest Frederick G.
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heaton, John Henniker
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
Hogg, Lindsay
Hoult, Joseph
Howard, Jn. (*Kent, Faver'h'm*
Howard J. (*Midd., Tottenham*
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Jeffreys, Rt. Hon. Arthur Fred.
Johnstone, Heywood
Kemp, Lieut.-Colonel George
Kenyon, Hon. G. T. (*Denbigh*
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W. (*Salop*
Kimber, Henry
Knowles, Lees
Lambton, Hon. Fredk. Wm.
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (*Glasgow*
Lawrence, Wm. F. (*Liverpool*
Lawson, John Grant (*Yorks, N R*
Lee, A. H. (*Hants, Fareham*)
Lees, Sir Elliott (*Birkenhead*)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N. S
Llewellyn, Evan Henry
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Lowe, Francis William
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas, Col. Francis (*Lowestoft*
Lucas, Reginald J. (*Portsmouth*
Macdona, John Cumming
MacIver, David (*Liverpool*)
M'Killop, James (*Stirlingshire*
Maxwell, Rt Hn Sir H. E (*Wigt'n*
Melville, Beresford Valentine
Middlemore, Jn. Throgmorton
Mitchell, William (*Burnley*)
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
Montagu, Hon. J. Scott (*Hants*)
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Morgan, David J. (*Walthamst'w*
Morrell, George Herbert
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mowbray, Sir Robt. Gray C.
Muntz, Sir Philip A.
Murray, Rt Hn A. Graham (*Bute*
Murray, Charles J. (*Coventry*)
Nicholson, William Graham
Nolan, Col. John P. (*Galway, N*
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay.
Parker, Sir Gilbert
Parkes, Ebenezer
Pease, Herbert Pike (*Darlingt'n*
Percy, Earl
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Pym, C. Guy
Rattigan, Sir William Henry
Reid, James (*Greenock*)
Renshaw, Sir Charles Bine
Ridley, S. F. (*Bethnal Green*)
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. C. Thomson
Robertson, H. (*Hackney*)
Rolleston, Sir John F. L.
Rollit, Sir Albert Kaye
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Samuel, Harry S. (*Limehouse*)
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Saunderson, Rt. Hn. Col. E. J.
Scott, Sir S. (*Marylebone, W.*)
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Shaw-Stewart, M. H. (*Renfrew*)
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Sinclair, Louis (*Romford*)
Smith, Abel H. (*Hertford, East*
Smith, James Parker (*Lanarks.*)
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (*Strand*)
Stanley, Edward Jas. (*Somerset*
Stanley, Lord (*Lancs.*)
Stock, James Henry
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Talbot, Lord E. (*Chichester*)
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Tufnell, Lieut.-Col. Edward
Valentia, Viscount
Vincent, Sir Edgar (*Exeter*)
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt Hn. Sir William H.
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Williams, Rt Hn J Powell (*Birm.*
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wilson, John (*Glasgow*)
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (*Bath*
Worsley-Taylor, Henry Wilson
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Anstruther.

Main Question again proposed.

*LORD BALCARRES (Lancashire, Chorley) said he wished to express his regret that his right hon. friend had not seen his way to include in the list of measures he proposed to pass during the present session the Musical Copyright Bill, which had passed through the House of Lords, and of which he was in charge in this House. He was bound to admit that the Bill was not uncontroversial, but it dealt with an acknowledged fraud, and he considered it was the duty of the Government to take it up. An obligation rested on the Government to deal with this Question in view of the fact that the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, in answer to representations from foreign countries, had promised he would do what he could to diminish the evil, etcetera. If his right hon. friend could not give facilities this session, which he considered he ought, in view of the fact that this fraud had assumed grave dimensions, and was injuring a very respectable and hard-working trade, he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would give an assurance that the matter would not be overlooked by the Government.

Mr. HERBERT ROBERTS (Denbighshire, W.) said he wished to ask if the right hon. Gentleman would give the House an assurance that, having regard to the very important questions which were pending, and which had a direct bearing on India and Indian government, he would take the Indian Budget at as early a date as possible.

Mr. DISRAELI (Cheshire, Altrincham) said he wished to support the request of his noble friend in reference to the Musical Copyright Bill. If it were not possible to proceed with the Bill this session, he hoped an assurance would be given that it would be proceeded with next session.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR said he was in entire sympathy with his noble friend and his hon. friend, but they must know perfectly well that there were limitations which necessarily circumscribed the action of the Government in connection with private Bills. He should still hope that the opposition to this particular Bill might be overcome. No one would rejoice more than he would if it were found possible to deal with this copyright question in the course of the present session. With regard to the Question of the hon. Gentleman opposite, he should be glad to bring in the Indian Budget at as convenient a time as he could; but, until he saw the progress of the programme of business he had sketched, it was impossible for him to give any distinct pledge.

Mr. MOON (St. Pancras, N.) asked the First Lord of the Treasury if, in the unfortunate event of his being unable to give an assurance in reference to the Musical Copyright Bill this session, he could make any promise with reference to the passing of the Bill next session.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR was understood to say he hoped so.

Mr. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty) said he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would be able to give him an assurance also with reference to two small Bills which had been on the Order Paper for some years. One was to enable small tenants in the Highlands to avail themselves of the Crofters Acts, and the other was to enable tenants with a valuation of £4 and under to vote at School Board elections. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would be able to give him a pledge with regard to these two Bills which materially affected the Highlands of Scotland, which the right hon. Gentleman knew and loved so well.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 231; Noes, 93. (Division List No. 194.)

AYES.

Abraham, W. (*Cork, N.E.*)
Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Arrol, Sir William
Atkinson, Right Hon. John
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hn. Sir H.
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (*Man'r*
Balfour, Capt. C. B. (*Hornsey*
Balfour, Rt. Hn. G. W. (*Leeds*
Balfour, Kenneth R. (*Christch*
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benjamin
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bignold, Arthur
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Bowles, Lt-Col. H. F (*Middlesex*
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brown, Sir Alx. H. (*Shropsh.*)
Bull, William James
Burke, E. Haviland
Campbell, John (*Armagh, S.*)
Carew, James Laurence
Carvill, Patrick Geo. Hamilton
Cavendish, R. F. (*N. Lancs.*)
Cavendish, V C W (*Derbysh.*)
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Cecil, Evelyn (*Aston Manor*)
Chamberlain, Rt Hon J (*Birm*
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J A (*Worc*
Chaplin, Right Hon. Henry
Chapman, Edward
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. T. H. A. E.
Coddington, Sir William
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Chas. Ready
Colston, Chas. Edw. H. Athole
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Corbett, T. L. (*Down, North*)
Cox, Irwin Edwd. Bainbridge
Cranborne, Viscount
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile

Cust, Henry John C.
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley-
Delany, William
Devlin, Joseph (*Kilkenny, N.*)
Dickson, Charles Scott
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Doogan, P. C.
Dorington, Rt. Hon. Sir J. E.
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers
Doxford, Sir Wm. Theodore
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Dyke, Rt. Hon. Sir Wm. Hart
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Faber, George Denison (*York*)
Fardell, Sir T. George
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Ed.
Fergusson, Rt Hn. Sir J. (*Man'r*
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Flower, Ernest
Flynn, James Christopher
Forster, Henry William
Foster, P. S. (*Warwick, S.W.*
Fyler, John Arthur
Gardner, Ernest
Gibbs, Hn A. G. H (*City of Lond*
Gibbs, Hn. Vicary (*St. Albans*
Godson, Sir Augustus Fredk.
Gordon, Hn. J. E. (*Elgin & Nrn*
Gore, Hon. G. R C Ormsby (*Salop*)
Gore, Hn. S. F. Ormsby- (*Linc*
Goschen, Hon. Geo. Joachim
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Gray, Ernest (*West Ham*)
Greene, Hy. D. (*Shrewsbury*)
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Hain, Edward
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hamilton, Rt Hn Ld. G. (*Midx*
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Haslam, Sir Alfred S.
Hatch, Ernest Frederick G.
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
Hogg, Lindsay
Hoult, Joseph
Howard, Jno (*Kent, Faversham*
Howard, J. (*Midd. Tottenham*)
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Jeffreys, Rt. Hon. Arthur Fred.
Kemp, Lieut.-Colonel George
Kenyon, Hon. G. T. (*Denbigh*
Kenyon-Slaney, Col. W. (*Salop*
Kilbride, Denis
Kimber, Henry
Knowles, Lees
Lambton, Hon. Fredk. Wm.
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (*Glasgow*
Law, H. Alex. (*Donegal, W.*)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (*Liverpool*
Lawson, John Grant (*Yorks, N.R*
Leamy, Edmund
Lee, A. H. (*Hants, Fareham*)
Lees, Sir Elliott (*Birkenhead*)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Fredk. N. S.
Llewellyn, Evan Henry
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Lowe, Francis William
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas, Col. Francis (*Lowestoft*
Lucas, Reg'ld J. (*Portsmouth*)
Lundon, W.
Macdona, John Cumming
MacIver, David (*Liverpool*)
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Arthur, Charles (*Liverpool*)
M'Killop, James (*Stirlingshire*
Malcolm, Ian
Maxwell, Rt Hn Sir H. E. (*Wigt'n*
Melville, Beresford Valentine
Middlemore, Jn. Throgmorton
Mitchell, Edw. (*Fermanagh, N.*
Mitchell, William (*Burnley*)
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
Montagu, Hon. J. Scott (*Hants.*
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Morgan, D. J. (*Walthamstow*)
Morrell, George Herbert
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Muntz, Sir Philip A.
Murray, Rt Hn A. Graham (*Bute*
Murray, Charles J. (*Coventry*)
Nicholson, William Graham
Nolan, Col. John P. (*Galway, N.*
O'Brien, James F. X. (*Cork*)
O'Brien, Patrick (*Kilkenny*)
O'Brien, P. J. (*Tipperary, N.*)
O'Kelly, J. (*Roscommon, N.*)
O'Mara, James
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
O'Shaughnessy, P. J.
Parker, Sir Gilbert
Parkes, Ebenezer
Pease, H. Pike (*Darlington*)
Pemberton, John S. G.
Percy, Earl
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Pym, C. Guy
Rattigan, Sir William Henry
Redmond, Jn. E. (*Waterford*)
Redmond, William (*Clare*)
Reid, James (*Greenock*)
Renshaw, Sir Charles Bine
Ridley, S. F. (*Bethnal Green*)
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. C. Thomson
Robertson, H. (*Hackney*)
Rolleston, Sir John F. L.
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Russell, T. W.
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Samuel, Harry S. (*Limehouse*)
Sassoon, Sir Edward Albert
Saunderson, Rt. Hn. Col. E. J.
Scott, Sir S. (*Marylebone, W.*)
Seely, Chas. Hilton (*Lincoln*)
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Shaw-Stewart, M. H. (*Renfrew*)
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Sinclair, Louis (*Romford*)
Smith, Abel H. (*Hertford, East*)
Smith, Jas. Parker (*Lanarks.*)
Smith, Hn. W. F. D. (*Strand*)
Stanley, Hon. A. (*Ormskirk*)
Stanley, Edw. Jas. (*Somerset*)
Stanley, Lord (*Lancs.*)
Stock, James Henry
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Sullivan, Donal
Talbot, Lord E. (*Chichester*)
Taylor, Austin (*East Toxteth*)
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. E. M.
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Tufnell, Lieut.-Col. Edward
Valentia, Viscount
Vincent, Sir Edgar (*Exeter*)
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt. Hon. Sir W. H.
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Whiteley, H (*Ashton und. Lyne*
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Williams, Rt Hn P Jowell- (*Birm*
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wilson, John (*Glasgow*)
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (*Bath*
Worsley-Taylor, Henry Wilson
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Yerburgh, Robt. Armstrong

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Allen, Chas. P. (*Glos., Stroud*)
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Atherley-Jones, L.
Barlow, John Emmott
Bayley, Thomas (*Derbyshire*)
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Brigg, John
Broadhurst, Henry
Bryce, Right Hon. James
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Causton, Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Channing, Francis Allston
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, Alfred (*Carmarthen*)
Davies, M. Vaughan- (*Cardign*
Dewar, John A. (*Inverness-sh.*)
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Douglas, Charles M. (*Lanark*)
Duncan, J. Hastings
Dunn, Sir William
Elibank, Master of
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (*Leith*

Foster, Sir Walter (*Derby Co.*
Fuller, J. M. F.
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Sir Wm.
Harwood, George
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Chas. Seale-
Hayter, Rt Hon Sir Arthur D.
Henderson, Arthur (*Durham*)
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hope, John Deans (*Fife, West*
Horniman, Frederick John
Hutchinson, Dr. Charles Fredk.
Jacoby, James Alfred
Joicey, Sir James
Jones, David Brynmor (*Swansea*
Jones, Wm. (*Carnarvonshire*)
Kearley, Hudson E.
Lambert, George
Langley, Batty
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (*Cornwall*)
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, David
Lough, Thomas
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Mappin, Sir Fredk. Thorpe
Morley, Rt. Hn. John (*Montrose*)
Moulton, John Fletcher
Palmer, Sir C. M. (*Durham*)
Partington, Oswald
Paulton, James Mellor
Pickard, Benjamin
Price, Robert John
Rea, Russell
Reid, Sir R. Threshie (*Dumfries*
Roberts, John Bryn (*Eifion*)
Roberts, John H. (*Denbighs.*)
Robertson, Edmund (*Dundee*)
Robson, William Snowdon
Runciman, Walter
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Thomas (*Hawick, B.*)
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (*Forfarshire*)
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Spencer, Rt Hn C. R. (*Northants*
Taylor, Theo. C. (*Radcliffe*)
Thomas, David Alfred (*Merthyr*
Thomas, F. Freeman (*Hastings*
Thomson, F. W. (*York, W. R.*)
Tomkinson, James
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Ure, Alexander
Wallace, Robert
Walton, J. Lawson (*Leeds, S.*)
Warner, Thos. Courtenay T.
Wason, E. (*Clackmannan*)
Wason, J. Cathcart (*Orkney*)
Weir, James Galloway
White, Luke (*York, E. R.*)
Whitley, J. H. (*Halifax*)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wilson, Chas. H. (*Hull, W.*)
Wilson, H. J. (*York, W. R.*)

TELLERS FOR THE NOES — Mr. Herbert Gladstone and Mr. William M'Arthur.

Ordered, That, for the remainder of the Session, Government Business be not interrupted, except at half-past Seven of the clock at an Afternoon Sitting, under the provisions of any standing order regulating the Sittings of the House, and may be entered upon at any hour though opposed, and that at the conclusion of Government Business each day Mr. Speaker do adjourn the House without Question put.

SUGAR CONVENTION BILL.

[SECOND READING.]

Order for Second Reading read.

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central): On the 24th of November last this House passed the following Resolution—

> "That this House approves the policy embodied in the Convention relating to sugar, signed at Brussels on the 5th of March, 1902, and in the event of the Convention receiving the ratifications required to make it binding, is prepared to adopt the necessary measures to enable His Majesty to carry out its provisions."

Since that Belgium, Germany, France, the Netherlands, Austro-Hungary, and Great Britain have all ratified the Convention, which thereby has become a binding document on those Powers. The Bill of which I ask leave to move the Second Reading to-day is a Bill, in the language of the Resolution, "to enable His Majesty to carry out" the provisions of the Convention. It is a Bill, in other words, the provisions of which have already received the sanction of the House of Commons, and to which the good faith of this country is pledged. It will be clear to the House that Great Britain cannot recede from engagements it has entered into or fail to carry them out without infinite discredit to itself, and without destroying the confidence of foreign nations in our ability and willingness to carry out our international obligations. I would not do hon. Members who oppose this Bill the injustice of supposing that this consideration has escaped them, and therefore we may perhaps fairly assume that in taking the unusual course of opposing the First Reading and now in opposing the Second Reading they are actuated not so much by any expectation of being able to defeat the Bill, but rather by a desire to express their hostility to the principles of the Convention itself, and perhaps they would not carry their hostility so far if they thought there was any real chance of their securing a majority in the lobby. (OPPOSITION cries: "Nonsense" and "Yes we should.") I am very sorry to hear that statement because, whatever the intention in opposing this Bill may be, the effect of success would be to prevent this country carrying out its treaty obligations.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): Is not the right hon. Gentleman aware that these treaty obligations are specifically conditional upon the constitutional laws regulating this country.

*MR. GERALD BALFOUR: This country is absolutely pledged to the Convention which has been ratified after receiving the approval of the House of Commons. In any case I feel sure of this, that that is the view foreign Powers are certain to take. I hope that hon. Members, at any rate on this side of the House, even if in the first instance they were opposed to the policy of the Convention, will do nothing now calculated to cast a doubt upon our obligation to give effect to the provisions of the international instrument to which we have set our seal.

Even apart from that consideration, has anything occurred which would justify the House of Commons in reversing the approval of the policy of the Convention which it placed on record last November; or is there anything in the Bill of an unexpected, objectionable character which would justify such a reversal? So far as I know there is nothing. On the contrary, what has occurred since has rather tended to remove objections which were formerly felt than to create new ones. Take, for instance, the question of the application of the Penal Clause to our colonies. The other Powers in depositing their ratifications made no reservation whatever. The only Power which made a reservation was Great Britain, who added the following declaration:—

> "In depositing the ratification of His Britannic Majesty, the Minister for Great Britain declares it necessary to place on record that the Government of His Britannic Majesty will not consent under any circumstances to be bound to penalise sugar imported into the United Kingdom from any of the self-governing colonies. He further declares that His Britannic Majesty's Government are not prepared to accept any reference of this question to the permanent Commission to be established under Article 7, and His Majesty's ratification of the Convention is deposited under the specific declarations above mentioned."

Why was this reservation made by the Government of Great Britain? Because doubts had been expressed in many quarters as to the true meaning and interpretation of the Convention. The view taken by the Government has, however, never changed. It was expressed in a circular dispatch from the Foreign Minister dated 13th January of this year—

> "The attitude of His Majesty's Government in regard to the matter has never varied. They have declined altogether to agree that Great Britain should be under any obligation to treat British colonies as foreign countries. The British delegates at the Brussels Conference repeatedly and formally declared that the fiscal relations of Great Britain and her colonies must remain outside the Convention, and that under no circumstances would the Penal Clause be applied in the United Kingdom to British colonial sugar. Those declarations are recorded, and are most explicit and categorical."

I admit that if the terms of the Convention had really put us under a contingent obligation to penalise colonial sugar, in that case the Convention would have been open to very serious objections from the British point of view, even though the contingency might be remote. We therefore thought it our duty, in order that there should be no doubt as to the true significance of the Convention, to direct His Majesty's Minister in depositing the ratification to accompany it by the reservation which I have just read, which removes all possible ambiguity.

Again, exception has been taken to the powers entrusted to the Permanent International Commission. The most extravagant and exaggerated language has been used on this subject. We have been told that we were abandoning the autonomy of our commerce and destroying the independence of our finance, and it was not obscurely hinted that the representatives of the Continental Powers on the Commission would combine together to outvote the British representative, with the deliberate intention of injuring British interests. How they were to contrive that is not apparent. The Commission have however met, and what have they done? They have considered the legislation, actual or proposed, of the various contracting countries—including the Bill now under discussion—and no objection has been taken to the legislation of any of the contracting countries, with the exception of Austria-Hungary and France. In the case of Austria-Hungary the Contingent Law was declared by the Commission not to be in harmony with the provisions of the Convention. In regard to France, exception was taken to the arrangements for refining in bond. We have every reason to believe that the legislation of Austria-Hungary will be brought into harmony with the provisions of the Convention before the 1st of September, and we have also reason to believe that at the earliest possible date France will make the necessary amendments in her system of refining in bond. So much for the contracting powers.

But what about the non-contracting countries? In the case of Spain, Denmark, Japan, and Roumania, the Commission have fixed the amount of the countervailing duties to be levied. None of those countries during the last year sent to Great Britain any appreciable amount of sugar, so that it will not be necessary to apply to them the Penal Clauses,

MR. LOUGH (Islington, N.): But suppose sugar comes from those countries?

*MR. GERALD BALFOUR: If sugar comes from those countries in any appreciable quantity, it will be the duty of this country to apply the Penal Clause. So far there is no reason to believe that sugar will come in sufficient amount to make it necessary to prohibit its entry. As to other non-contracting States, the Permanent Commission have, as a provisional measure, applied the scale of countervailing duties at present in use in the United States. What is the practical effect of that decision? In the case of four countries, and four only, does it appear that we shall have under any circumstances to apply the Penal Clause. Those countries are Russia, Argentina, Chili, and Peru. In the case of Russia the amount of sugar sent to this country during 1902 amounted only to about £2,000 worth. Peru has already signified her desire to adhere to the Convention, but she has not yet brought her legislation into conformity. It is not yet known whether Argentina and Chili intend to adhere to the Convention. The case of Argentina is somewhat peculiar, as part of the sugar exported from that country is in receipt of a bounty and part is not. But that has caused no difficulty in the United States, and I see no reason why it should create any difficulty here.

With these facts before us we have some measure of the true magnitude of those molehills which certain hon. Members have been so anxious to magnify into mountains. We now see what these magniloquent phrases about abandoning the autonomy of our commerce and destroying the independence of our finance really come to. Even supposing—which I do not for a moment believe will be the case—that we had to prohibit the entire imports of sugar which we receive from these four countries, it would amount to only about 1,000,000 cwts., or less than one-thirtieth of the total amount imported into this country.

MR. LOUGH: How much do the West Indies send?

*MR. GERALD BALFOUR: That has nothing to do with the point. Seeing that the total production of the world is about 13,000,000 tons, a change in the particular source from which about 50,000 tons—less than one-half per cent. of that production—is sent to the British market, need not seriously disturb the slumbers of my right hon. friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer.

I think I have said enough to show that nothing has occurred since the passing of the Resolution last November to justify the reversal of the conclusion then arrived at. I suppose, therefore, that those who intend to oppose this Bill will rest their case upon the arguments with which we were made familiar in the previous debate. Now on that occasion three main lines of opposition were urged. In the first place there was the opposition of those who profess a desire for the abolition of the bounties but who object to the Penal Clause. That was the attitude taken up by the Royal Commission which inquired into the case of the West Indies, and until last year it was also generally believed to be the attitude of the majority of the Liberal Party. At all events that was the policy they had pursued for very many years past. Last year I must admit revealed a change. Whether hon. Members opposite have been converted by the confectioners in their constituencies I cannot say; but at all events most of them seem to have deserted their colours and gone over body and soul to the second class of objectors. What are the second class of objectors? They are those who claim to represent the interests of the consumers and of the sugar-using industries, and who denounce the Government for having wantonly thrown away a present of millions of money which the bounty-giving nations are foolish enough to make us. The third class of objectors are those who hold that the Convention will not have the effect of appreciably raising the price, and therefore cannot avail to save the West Indies from ruin.

In the course of the previous debate I went very carefully into these various arguments, and I do not wish now to travel over the ground which I then traversed in detail, but I should like to make one or two observations. In the first place it is evident that these various objections are not really consistent one with the other. Those who hold that the abolition of bounties will in itself be a good thing, though they may object to the particular means we have taken to bring it about, cannot complain of the economic effect of the abolition of bounties, which is obviously independent of the means by which it has been effected. They cannot, make it the ground of opposition to this Bill that the effect of the Convention will be to raise prices. On the other hand, those who contend that the effect of the Convention will be to cause a heavy rise in price to the consumer, cannot also contend that the West Indies will not be benefited. We shall probably in the course of this debate hear all these arguments over and over again, but I trust that at least we shall not again hear them used by the same speakers. In the next place the effect which the Convention is likely to have upon prices is so important that I should like to say a few words on this part of the subject, in order to make the position clear as I understand it. The opponents of our policy argue as if this was a perfectly simple matter. They start from an assumption that a bounty of 5s. per cwt. or £5 per ton is given by the producing countries. They take the consumption of this country at about 1,500,000 tons, and by multiplying the figures together they arrive at the easy conclusion that this country, by the effect of this Convention, will be throwing away a sum of money equal to between £7,000,000 and £8,000,000 sterling. My hon. friend the Member for King's Lynn, speaking the other day at a meeting in the Westminster Palace Hotel, went even farther than this. According to the *Times* of July 18th he said—

> "It was a Bill the essential clause of which put the King of England into foreign bondage, for he was placed under the orders of a permanent Commission sitting at Brussels. Sugar which in Berlin cost 5d. per lb. and in Paris 7½d. per lb. could be bought in London for 1½d. per lb. That was in consequence of the now existing, but soon to be abolished, bounties."

In other words my hon. friend the Member for King's Lynn made a bounty, which at the utmost calculation does not amount to more than a halfpenny per pound responsible for a difference in price as between London and Berlin of 3½d, and as between London and Paris of 6d.

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES: The figures I quoted were from Mr. Czarnikow a very great authority in the sugar trade.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: It is quite possible that the figures quoted correctly represent the difference in price between London on the one side and Berlin and Paris on the other. But I do not think Mr. Czarnikow drew the same conclusion as the hon. Member. I do not think he would be prepared to commit himself to the hon. Member's deduction that a bounty of a halfpenny per pound was responsible for a difference in price as between London and Paris of 6d. I really think that my hon. friend the Member for King's Lynn on this occasion has given somewhat less careful consideration than he usually does to the subjects to which he devotes his attention, or else he must have been presuming a good deal on the credulity of his audience. However that may be, even the more modest estimate of between £7,000,000 and £8,000,000 which we are informed the British Government have recklessly and foolishly thrown away rests upon a patent fallacy. What is that fallacy? It is that of supposing that the producers and exporters of bounty-fed sugar make a present of the whole advantage of the bounty they enjoy to the British consumer. It is absolutely certain that they will do nothing of the kind unless they are obliged to, and they will only be obliged to do it in certain very exceptional conditions of the market. As a general rule, I doubt whether they give one-tenth part of the bounty they receive to the consumer, and what they give to the consumer they give, not only to the consumer in this country, but in the producing country as well. Those who have studied the history of the sugar industries during the last ten years know very well that prices have been subject to violent fluctuations. During the last ten years prices have varied from 18s. a cwt. down to something below 6s. a cwt., which was the figure reached for the first time in the whole history of the sugar trade in June or July last. I expressed an opinion in the debate last year that, after the Convention had come into operation, the average price of sugar in the next ten years would not be higher, and would probably be lower, than the average price in the ten years which have just passed; and to that opinion I still adhere. At the same time I am quite ready to grant that so long as the present cost of production continues the effect of the Convention will probably be to prevent sugar from falling again, as low as 6s. per cwt. It will also, I believe, prevent sugar from rising so high as 18s. per cwt. Let me remind the House that 6s. per cwt. is nearly 3s. per cwt. below the lowest cost of production. By far the larger amount of sugar imported into this country comes from the Continent, and more especially from Germany, and it is the cost of production of 88 per cent. beet sugar f.o.b. Hamburg that I am speaking of. The cost of sugar from the West Indies, proper allowance being made for difference of quality, is also about the same figure—namely, from £8 15s. to £9 per ton. In my judgment the effect of the Convention will be to bring about an era of moderate and, at the same time, comparatively stable prices. In June or July last the cost of sugar was 3s. per cwt. less than the cost of production. Even the forward prices quoted for delivery in April and June, eight months after the Convention comes into operation, are barely, if at all, above the cost of production. I commend that circumstance to hon. Gentlemen opposite and their friends the confectioners, who seem to be crying out very long before they are hurt. At the same time I do not wish to question for one moment that the price of sugar after the Convention is passed, will not gradually rise above the level of the cost of production. I think it will so rise until it represents the cost of production plus a reasonable profit to the producer. That price I put under present circumstances, and assuming the present cost of production to continue, at about £10 per ton. £10 per ton may I think be regarded as the normal or natural price after the Convention has come into operation, and a system of free trade is established in connection with this commodity. At such a price, and provided the trade is freed from the violent fluctuations which the bounty system tends to produce and to aggravate, the West Indian planter may hope not indeed, perhaps, to make a great fortune, but, at all events, to secure something like a living wage. What ruined the West Indian planter in the past was not the average price of sugar. It was the uncertainty in the price and the recurrent periods of very low prices. With moderate but fairly stable prices he can once more look forward to a time of reasonable prosperity. Possibly some one may point to the price of 6s. touched in July last, and contrast this with the price of 10s. which I anticipate will be the normal price when the Convention has had its full effect. But does any one who has considered the problem imagine that a price nearly 3s. below the cost of production could possibly continue indefinitely, even if the Convention had never been heard of? Experience and common sense alike show that that is not possible. When the price falls as low as 6s. per cwt. the necessary result is to curtail the area of production. That again produces a reaction, prices rise, and the amount of production also rises, and a further reaction is produced and prices again fall. In this way you have a series of fluctuations in which prices are alternately greatly below and greatly above the cost of production. That is the condition of things that has ruined the West Indies, and that is the condition of things which we desire to bring to an end. If the price really was to continue at 6s. for any considerable period I believe the result would be that Austria and Germany would probably be the only countries to ride out the storm. But what would become of cheap sugar then? Is it not clear under these circumstances that the Austrian and German kartels would become masters of the market, and that prices would rise, not merely from 6s. to 10s., but to a figure which would, I think, convince the opponents of the Convention of the short-sightedness of their present policy.

I have alluded in the course of my speech to a meeting of the Confectioners Alliance recently held at the Westminster Palace Hotel, and which was addressed by my hon. friend the Member for King's Lynn. I believe the chairman of the meeting, who is also one of the most active organisers of the opposition to the Sugar Convention, is a member of the firm of James Keiller and Sons, the well known makers of marmalade. I do not know whether Mr. Bond represents the opinions held by the firm at the present time. If so, I can only say that they have not always been of that opinion. In 1889 Messrs James Keiller and Sons wrote a letter to Sir Neville Lubbock, which seems to me to fit in so well with the circumstances of the present moment that I will ask the leave of the House to read it.

> "Dear Sir,—As large consumers of sugar we trust the efforts of your association will succeed in spreading the knowledge of facts bearing on the question of sugar bounties. The more widely they are known, and the better understood, the more evident will it appear that the abolition of bounties would not injure the fruit-growing, fruit-preserving, and the confectionery trades of this country, but would confer a direct benefit on them by giving them an ultimately cheaper as well as a more regular and more reliable supply of sugar. More than a year ago we expressed this opinion to Mr. J. Duncan, and subsequent discussion and study of the question have served to confirm it. An international agreement on the sugar bounty question would be a blow to bounties of all kinds which might be applied to any trade, and those who are fortunate enough to bring negotiations on the subject to a successful issue will merit the gratitude of the working classes as well as the merchants and manufacturers of the country.—We are, yours truly,
>
> JAMES KEILLER & SONS."

Before I conclude let me briefly call attention to one sentence in this letter. It is that in which reference is made to the possibility of the bounty system being applied to other commodities as well as sugar. Some ten years ago when the letter was written that danger might have seemed comparatively remote. I venture to say that it is remote no longer. The most dangerous bounties are not those which arise from direct payments by a Government. They are those which arise from the operations of cartels supported by a prohibitive tariff. This kind of bounty is peculiarly dangerous because where ever a trade is organised under a trust or cartel, it can be applied to almost any article which comes within the protective tariff. Now the Brussels Convention has struck the first formidable blow against this new and insidious method of bounties. I venture to ask the support of the House to this Bill not merely on the ground that the Convention will avert ruin from the West Indian planter, and relieve the British sugar refiner from unfair competition, without, in my opinion, injuring the consumer; not merely on the ground that the Bill is required in order to enable us to fulfil our treaty obligations; but also because the Convention is the first great public instrument which has recognised that form of bounty which arises from the operation of trusts acting under the cover of protection, and acknowledges that to meet and defeat such bounties the strongest fiscal remedies may be properly and legitimately applied. I beg to move.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

*MR. LOUGH: The right hon. Gentleman has proved to us with some skill that we are bound to fulfil the treaty. Well, that does not carry us far. This Bill is quite different from the treaty. When we had last a long speech from the right hon. Gentleman on this subject, we were told that we were to fulfil the treaty in quite another way. We were to do it by countervailing duties. There is nothing about countervailing duties in the Bill. He does not propose to carry out the treaty in that way, and we may say that there may be other ways of meeting our obligations under the treaty. The House is perfectly free to do as it pleases with the Bill. It is not for us on this side of the House to say what we would do if we were supported by a majority and in the right hon. Gentleman's place. If we were there, we would let him know what we would do. The argument of the right hon. Gentleman about the Powers whose sugar we would have to prohibit is that we only get a thirtieth from those Powers. How much sugar do we get from the West Indian Islands, which started this campaign? It would have been convenient to the House if the right hon. Gentleman had answered that question. We got only a fortieth from the West Indies, and the Government think it necessary on behalf of that fortieth to undertake all this campaign. And now it is the right hon. Gentleman who says that the thirtieth is a mere bagatelle and not worth considering. I desire to move the Amendment that stands in my name, namely, that this Bill be read a second time this day three months. We had a statement from the First Lord of the Treasury with regard to the Bill, to which I would direct the attention of the House. He was speaking of the new fiscal proposals, and he put this Bill in the forefront of his speech. He said—

> "If it were not that the proper investment of capital in the West Indies has become impracticable and dangerous, there is no conceivable reason why we should not allow the foreigner to tax himself for the benefit of the consumer in this country."

In that remarkable statement of the First Lord of the Treasury there are three confessions to which I would direct the attention of the House. Firstly, he confesses that this Bill is brought forward in the interest of a small group of capitalists; secondly, he confesses that it is brought forward to relieve the foreigner of a tax; and thirdly, he confesses that the payment of that tax was a great benefit to the consumers in this country. Now I think there could not be a more excellent epitome of the fiscal proposals now before the country. It is supposed by many that the principles of this Bill are sanctioned by the Royal Commission that inquired into the question six years ago. In accordance with the recommendations of that Commission we spent £400,000, and we make an annual payment of nearly £40,000 to these Islands. We have fulfilled every recommendation made by the Commission, but there is no truth in the contention that they went the length of the Bill now before us. Anyone who has read the speeches of the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Berwick Division will know that no Commission of which he was a member would recommend the closing of our ports in the way now proposed. It did not recommend the laying of any permanent burden on the taxpayers, or any countervailing duties. Its most fruitful recommendation was that other sources of cultivation should be resorted to. The fate of that report throws light on the alleged enquiry the Government is making now. The Secretary for the Colonies was not satisfied with the recommendations made by the Royal Commission. The Commission itself was only a blind, and the moment the right hon. Gentleman had carried out those recommendations, he introduces a new policy. Only last July we granted £250,000 to the sugar planters of those islands, one of the most flagitious applications of public money ever sanctioned by Parliament. Then he proceeds to introduce this Bill, the whole responsibility for which, therefore, rests on the Cabinet alone.

Perhaps we will have a complete view of the question] if the House will allow me to look at the position occupied in this country by the great commodity with which the Bill deals. Let us contrast the position of the sugar industry in England and in France. The moment we do that we become aware of the great disadvantages from which we suffer compared with France. France is a producing country. It was in France that the art of extracting sugar from beet was devised. The French also possess great skill in refining and in the manufacture of sweet meats. But they never developed any great industry out of their discoveries. The sugar was mainly used in sweetening coffee and making cakes and sweet meats, and the total consumption is much the same as it was in England sixty years ago, and amounts to only twenty-nine pounds per head of the population. And it is remarkable that this is also the consumption in Germany, Austria, Holland, and Belgium—all the great producing countries. We turn to England and find that against these natural disadvantages we have only one set-off, and that is our free-trade or dumping principles, which permit the free import of sugar in abundant quantities. What is the result? The springs of industry have been loosed, invention has been stimulated. Capital and enterprise were devoted to the development of fruit preserving, fruit growing, the manufacture of mineral waters, to brewing, and to hundreds of other kindred industries; so that sugar has ceased to be merely a food, and become a raw material of the greatest importance, and the national consumption has risen to the astounding figure of ninety pounds per head of the population. When we come to ask, "Why have they not been able to do this in these foreign producing countries, where they have every natural advantage?" the only answer is that in France and Germany they had also protection, prohibition of imports, a heavy duty, and high prices, which are the very evils which the Government desire to bring on this country. When we look at the question from this simple standpoint, it seems as if the Government had merely entered into a conspiracy with these foreign Powers to destroy some of our fairest national industries. But it has been said that the object of the Convention is not to make sugar dear, and that the price will not rise materially. It would be desirable if we could get a clear understanding with regard to this. Without higher prices none of the objects of the Convention can be realised. The right hon. Gentleman has been candid in regard to this matter, and he says it will rise 5s. per cwt.

*MR. GERALD BALFOUR: No, Sir; I do not think the average price will rise at all.

*MR. LOUGH: I will not weary the House with niggling details. I will present my argument in my own way. I thought I was trying to treat the right hon. Gentleman fairly. The Colonial Secretary admitted that there might be some rise.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN, Birmingham, W.): I never made any such admission.

*MR. LOUGH: Well, Sir Henry Norman said ——

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: Nor Sir Henry Norman.

*MR. LOUGH: Sir Henry Norman suggested that there might be a rise of a halfpenny in the lb. But there is a rise already of 30 per cent. in the price of sugar in view of the passage of this Bill. I think that the Government would do better if they were candid. If the price of sugar does not rise, no advantage whatever can accrue. If you look at the Report of the West Indian Commission, you will find that the promise was made that benefit could only accrue to these Islands if the price of sugar rose. But suppose the rise is a halfpenny in the lb., 5s. per cwt., or £5 per ton on the consumption I have quoted, it would impose a burden of £8,000,000 on the people of this country. We have placed a tax of, roughly, a halfpenny on sugar which brings us in £7,000,000 a year. That is to say that a rise of 1d. per lb., which has almost taken place at the present moment in the price of sugar, means a burden of £15,000,000 on the people of the country; and that is equal to the produce of a sixpenny income tax. With the rise of a penny sugar is only 2½d. per lb. But why should the rise in price stop at 2½d., or 3½d., or 4½d.? Why should not the price of the sugar rise to the same level as in Paris or Berlin– the capitals of the countries with which we have entered into alliance? Whatever the rise may be every penny represents £15,000,000 of a burden on the people of this country. And in this connection I would warn the House of the one great mistake that it has always made in dealing with this Government. It has never realised the weight of the burden that the small beginnings of its bad policy might throw upon the people. When we entered on the war with South Africa the cost was to be £14,000,000; but in three years it ran up to £230,000,000. If we pass this Bill, I should not at all be surprised that it will lay on the people of this country a burden as great as that caused by the South African War. We may be told that the object of the Government is not to destroy our industries, nor raise prices, but to abolish bounties. What does that argument mean? It means that we shall get rid of these bounties in accordance with the principles of free trade. I could wish that this were true; but I regret to say that it is not only not true, but the very opposite of the truth.

When you come to examine the Convention, you see that by Clause 1 bounties are abolished with a profusion of expression which would make any one suspicious. But by Clause 3 a surtax is set up. We had never heard anything of this surtax from the Government. The surtax is the difference which is allowed between the import duty charged in the producing countries, and the Excise duty in these countries; and the surtax is fixed at £2 10s. per ton, or 30 per cent., on the price of the sugar. I wish to make two remarks on that point. The first is, that that is a provision absolutely hostile to the principles of free trade. Anyone who examines the last clause in the Convention will see that it is there plainly and openly stated that the object of the surtax is effectually to protect the home markets of the consuming countries; not only that but each one of the countries which have gone into the Convention are open and avowed protectionists. There is also a provision which allows the surtax, if not sufficient for the purpose intended, to be increased. There is therefore written over this Convention the words "Free trade abandon, all who enter here." What the Government have done is this—they have substituted for a system of bounties which were an offence against free trade, with which we had nothing to do, and which were favourable to this country, a system which is still more offensive to free trade, and for which we are responsible, and which will do the utmost injury to the people of this country. The second remark I wish to make on the surtax is, that it is a circle within a circle. It is a provision of the Convention very beneficial to all the signatories except to us. It makes it a Convention between a flock of sheep and a pack of wolves. They all get something out of it except us; and we get nothing, because we are not producers. The surtax enables them to set up the most extravagant cartel ever established in the world. That cartel will control an output of 5,000,000 tons of sugar annually. Its object is to regulate production, distribution, and price. What is the last information we have on this point? The Prime Minister does not deny that there has been a Conference, from which we were excluded, between the Sugar-producing Powers, the object of which was to raise the price of sugar in England and prevent the flooding of the British market. If the House will only think of the extent to which that may be carried, it will realise that the suggestion I have made as to the terrible burden which will be placed on the people of this country was not in the least exaggerated.

It adds to the humours of the situation to remember that at the very time the Government are assisting in founding this cartel, the Prime Minister and the Colonial Secretary are going up and down the country lecturing the people on the evil of Trusts. Then there is the very extraordinary Article IV., to which I wish to direct the attention of the House. It obliges all the signatories to this Convention to impose a special duty on the sugar from all countries which give a bounty of any kind. When we had a discussion on 24th November last on the subject we were told by the President of the Board of Trade that the Government would adopt this course, that countervailing duties were not offensive to free trade, that when imposed under the Convention there was no harm in them, and that Mr. Gladstone, Lord Farrer, and others had spoken in support of countervailing duties. He went so far as to say that there were some who considered countervailing duties a "damnable heresy, an unclean thing which this House should not touch," but that he regarded such persons as guilty of "aggravated economic prudery." He was followed by the Colonial Secretary, who was as clear in his statement that Mr. Gladstone approved of countervailing duties. The Chancellor of the Exchequer, the other day, blamed me for suggesting that such duties were in the Bill and the right hon. Gentleman said there was no suggestion of countervailing duties. I would ask him to talk to his colleagues the President of the Board of Trade and the Colonial Secretary as to that. We are not being treated fairly in this matter. We ought to know why countervailing duties were adopted in the first case; and why they have been abandoned. This is not a mere debating point. The Prime Minister has already told us twice that the principle of this Bill has been assented to. The President of the Board of Trade also put that point just now. But we assented to it when the agreement was for countervailing duties. That is not now the principle of the Bill at all. The Bill is based on the principle of prohibition. As far as I can see, what happened was this. The Board of Trade found themselves in this difficulty—that countervailing duties were impossible, if not unconstitutional. I believe the Government lawyers in 1881 said they were unconstitutional. For some reason, they have been abandoned; and the policy of prohibition has been adopted. This is a notion taken from the 42nd Clause of the Customs Consolidation Act, which deals with false coin, indecent literature, adulterated food, and diseased cattle; and the idea of the Government is to add the word "sugar" at the end. What parallel can there be between a clean and decent import such as sugar and anything else mentioned in that clause.

Consider the difficulty that this policy of prohibition will lead us into. It will be necessary to issue orders for prohibition against some of the countries who are our best friends and customers, such as Russia, Denmark, Spain and Portugal, the United States, and the Southern States of America which have been mentioned. You will have prohibition against every one of them. Just think of the position of a captain of a British ship at a loss for cargo at any one of the ports in these countries. He will not be able to fill up with sugar. My hon. friend the Member for Hull, who sends his ships abroad laden with coal to bring back sugar, will no longer be able to do so, because a prohibition order may be issued against the particular country at which his ships happen to be. If you adopt a policy of countervailing duties sugar may be admitted at a price; but under this Bill no added price will permit it to enter. This measure will necessitate a policy of certificates of origin. These certificates apply not only to the prohibited countries, but to all other countries from which we receive sugar. After the 1st September next, no sugar can come into this country without a certificate of origin. The reason is plain. We might get sugar from a prohibited country, through a country which observed the Convention. There will be further proofs required. The domestic aspect of this question of prohibition ought to cause this House to pause before it puts its sanction on such a policy. We ought to think of the difficulties we will get ourselves into with other countries, such as the United States. If the Government will not consider the question more fully from the domestic point of view, I believe the consideration of the question will be forced upon them by the foreign difficulties into which they will stumble.

There is one other very curious provision in this Convention. Article 7 sets up the Permanent Commission already mentioned. The House ought to bear in mind the constitution of this extraordinary Court. It is to consist of eleven Judges, ten appointed by Continental sugar-producing Powers, and one appointed by this country. It will deal with all the questions of prohibition. But the curious thing is that while we only appoint one Judge, all the interests the Court will have to deal with are ours and ours alone. The other contracting Powers are not importers. We are to submit all our great interests and trade in this vast article of commerce, as well as the interests of all the trades springing from it, to this Court in which we are in a minority of one to ten. I suppose the Government were as much misinformed about this question of imports as they were as to where we got our sugar from. At any rate, they ought to have known that this question of imports did not interest foreign Powers. They are producers. We produce nothing. We may be starved under the Convention. We are entirely dependent upon our imports. There was a meeting of this Permanent Commission; and I do not quarrel with the description of it which was given by the right hon. Gentleman. It was true, as far as it went, but I would direct the attention of this great Parliament, which believes in public opinion and in letting the people know what is going on as regards interests which concern them, to the proceedings of that meeting. The Convention met on the 1st of June. I waited for ten days, thinking we would be furnished with an account of the proceedings, and I asked the noble Lord the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs a Question on the subject. He could give me no answer; but he handed over the Question to the Prime Minister, no doubt relying on his great capacity to answer Questions without telling us anything. Only yesterday we were told that we would get the proceedings in about a fortnight or three weeks. Was there ever anything so insulting said to the House of Commons? Here we are assembled to discuss a Bill, the whole basis of which is this Permanent Commission. We must remember that this treaty is not a thing which we can merely agree to, and that then nothing more happens. It is a sort of living organism; it sets up a Permanent Commission which may meet as often as it likes, and may send out these prohibition orders which affect our trade and our trade alone of all the countries in Europe.

The first duty of the Convention was to consider whether each of the signatories to the treaty was fulfilling its obligations. Its second duty was to decide which countries outside were giving bounties. What did it do with the Powers who signed the treaty? Germany appears to be the Power which comes out on top in all this affair. The affection and love which the Colonial Secretary has for Germany is amazing. It was decided unanimously that Germany was acting in harmony with the Convention; and will the House believe that Germany is the only Power which has an absolutely clean record. Austria-Hungary was held to have acted contrary to the terms of the Convention. Then the Convention dealt with France, and some persons present made a complaint against that country. I know that the British, among other delegates, promoted this criticism of the French system. France was condemned; and we are told that her system was not in accordance with the Convention. Holland escaped because it was found by a majority to be acting in harmony with the Convention; but when the Convention meets again in October that majority may be turned into a minority. Belgium has passed no law, and if we pass no law—and I earnestly hope we will not—we will be in the same position as France, Belgium, and Austria-Hungary. None of those countries have brought their proceedings into harmony with the Convention. Why should we hurry? I recommend the House of Commons to be extremely slow and to watch the action of these other Powers. Then the Convention went outside the circle, and the first Power attacked was Russia. Russia is a very astute country to deal with. The Convention went, so to speak, baldheaded for Russia, and unanimously agreed that the Russian system was all wrong, and fixed a countervailing duty of thirty francs on raw sugar and forty francs on refined sugar. Russia did not take this lying down. She entered into communication with Germany and said, "Would you mind bringing up our case again. We think that this Convention does not really know much about sugar. It has not dealt with us fairly." The Convention met again and decided that everything it had arranged about Russia was wrong, and it reversed its decision with regard to Russia, the Argentine and other countries. In short, it appears to have got into a great mess; and on its second meeting it said in effect—"We do not know anything about the sugar legislation of these countries, and we have no means of finding out anything about them; but we would advise any country to adopt the system in the United States." This is a very curious position. The United States has been too astute to go into this business at all. How then comes it that we are told to fall back on the United States system. I immediately asked what was the United States system. But the noble Lord the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs declined to tell me. We are, therefore, asked to accept this decision of the Convention without in the least knowing what it commits this country to. Surely, if the business of our merchants is to be submitted to a tribunal, nothing is more essential than that the decisions of that tribunal should be clear, and that it should be readily known what they are. I ask whether anything of the kind can be said about this Commission. It is a farcical Commission; and I do not believe that even its own members take their duties seriously. We have no information that they have made any effort to fulfil the obligation made on them in the treaty. Why should the House of Commons have anything more to say to this extraordinary transaction?

Why have we gone into the Convention at all? It has been confessed to-day that we did it to assist the West Indian Islands. It would be more true to say that we have been led into this Convention by the astuteness and ability of two or three capitalists who pose in this country to represent the West Indian Islands but who only represent their own interests. I allude especially to Sir Neville Lubbock. He deserves the greatest credit for the way in which he has conducted this matter. When the Colonial Secretary was at the Board of Trade in 1881, Sir Neville Lubbock came to him with the same story; but then the right hon. Gentleman said that the Government preferred the interests of the vast body of consumers in this country to the interests of a small group of capitalists; and the Board of Trade declined to have anything to say to this business. How different was the Colonial Secretary then from what he is now. No new factor has arisen within the last twenty years. One reason why there is such an extremely strong feeling throughout the great industries whose prosperity will be affected by this Bill is that they thought that in 1881 they received the Magna Charta of their liberties from the right hon. Gentleman himself. They thought they could invest their capital safely, and that the Government would not sanction any disturbance, and now they find their hopes shattered and their business disorganised by the present Convention. I will only say with regard to the West Indies this one word. The right hon. Gentleman has accused some of us of being inconsistent with regard to the West Indies. He cannot level that accusation against me. I have always been consistent in that I have always said that we ought to look after ourselves at home and let the West Indies look after themselves, we giving them what assistance we can by way of advice. The danger of the West Indies is that they rely too much on sugar, and when they use the fertile soil and beautiful climate for other cultivations besides sugar they will escape this danger. Already during the last five or six years in which we have been discussing this matter three-fourths of the West Indies have got out of their dependence upon sugar, and the other fourth will free themselves if they are left to the healthy operation of economic laws, and not subjected to this grandmotherly legislation. The population of the islands is increasing satisfactorily. During the last three years the coolie immigration has doubled, and reports of reasonable prosperity are given by each of their Governments. That this is so is shown by the annual reports sent to us, and it is a strange thing under those circumstances to undertake this extraordinary legislation. We only get about three per cent. of our sugar from the West Indian Islands, and we are putting this great burden on all our supplies of sugar in order that those who send us three per cent. may get a little more out of it. If they sent us all their production it would only be 15 per cent. of what we consume. While we give a slight benefit to the West Indies, we give the great benefit to those who send us most sugar. Germany sends us 50 per cent. of our sugar, and therefore Germany gets 50 per cent. of the benefit. If the benefits to be derived from the legislation are doubtful, its risks and dangers are clear and apparent. We shall put a great burden on our consumers and upset these industries of which I have spoken, and dislocate the great shipping industry. Shipowners are alarmed. New vessels will not be built, nor new routes opened out for a trade which depends on the whim of a secret foreign Commission. Nor are the evils of the situation confined to our own land. The Powers outside the Convention will be irritated and jealous. I therefore suggest that the House goes no further in this matter. Let the Prime Minister, who is so good at answering Questions to us, make some statement—raise some difficulty—so that this shall not be proceeded with for six or eight months, and then the whole thing will disappear. Sugar as an import occupies to-day the the position which corn occupied in the forties. Cobden always put sugar next to corn in importance, and he saw that if the principles of free trade were applied to corn, they would gradually spread to every other great commodity. No doubt the Government may, with the assistance of their majority, put their Bill through. Our opposition may not be of any use, but we must make the greatest effort on behalf of the principles in which we believe. You may carry this Bill, but if you do I am certain that when our ports are closed under it people outside will look back with deep regret to the time when our ships could come without certificates of origin of the goods they brought when our ports were open, when the factories of the country could be carried on without the prying visits of Government inspectors, and when it was the fixed principle of the legislation this House that there should be no tax on food or raw material. I beg to move.

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES: I rise to second the Resolution so ably proposed by my hon. friend opposite. Sir, this is a Bill to promote a foreign monopoly created by Germany in sugar, and the President of the Board of Trade, forsooth, tells us that it is a pure formality; that we have scarcely a right to debate this measure; that the House is bound to pass it because the credit of the country is pledged, and that if we reject it the honour of the country will be somehow involved. It is nothing of the kind. The right hon. Gentleman forgets that the Convention itself, by Article 12, provides that the fulfilment of the mutual engagements therein contained is expressly subject to the formalities and requirements established by constitutional law. One of the formalities and requirements of our constitutional law is that before any tax can be placed on the subject the consent of this House must be obtained. This House has a complete right, and it is not only the right of this House, but its absolute duty, to reject this Bill. This Bill is recommended to the House by the argument that England is going to gain something, but it is the fact that England is going to gain nothing. It is avowed that England must lose. All that is suggested is that the West Indies may gain something and also the sugar refiners.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I suppose that, in the hon. Member's argument, the sugar refiners are not Englishmen.

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES: As a matter of fact it appears from the Blue-book that they are mostly Germans. I will deal with the sugar refiners and their interests if the right hon. Gentleman will only be patient. Now, Sir, let me point out that this country is the great market for sugar; this is the great consuming country to which every beet sugar manufacturer looks for the sale of his produce. You may add the United States, but the United States provides for itself. The English market is the great prize contended for by European sugar-producing countries, who, to capture it, have fought each other by bounty against bounty. The result in this country has been cheap sugar. The figures I quote are those of Mr. Czarnikow, who, at all events, has not an English name. [A VOICE: He is a broker.] I have no doubt he is a most eminent broker; he says the price in London is now 1½d. per lb., while in Berlin it is 5d., and in Paris 7½d. I confess that it seemed to me that the cause of this difference in the price of sugar was bounties, but the right hon. Gentleman has said that is not so. The right hon. Gentleman, while denying that bounties cause the difference in price, offered no other explanation.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR was understood to say that the difference partly arose from the internal tax.

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES: I am glad to have got from the right hon. Gentleman an admission that part of the difference in price is caused by protective duties. But I do not care what is the cause of sugar being only 1½d. a lb. in England and 7½d. in Berlin. I am content to accept cheap sugar. It may be a bad thing, but I am prepared to endure it because I see it has been a source of cheap food and the cause of setting up very extensive industries in this country. I am afraid the House has no idea of the amount and extent of these industries. Take the preserving industry. I know of no preserves quite so good as French preserves, no chocolates quite so good as the French, yet it is the fact that one French manufacturer of chocolate, because of the cheapness of sugar, has established himself in this country, and that English jams, made with French cheap sugar, are driving French jams out of the market in France. The enormous trade in sweetmeats which has sprung up has been founded and encouraged by our cheap sugar. There is not one little shop or a single country fair that does not show new kinds of sweetmeats entirely unknown in older days, the whole of which has been encouraged by cheap sugar. Of course I have every sympathy with the sugar planters and producers in the West Indies, and I have a considerable amount of sympathy with the capitalists who furnish the money necessary for them to conduct their business, and I am prepared to entertain any fair proposition to enable them to carry on a business in which for generations they have so signally failed, but there is nothing either in this present Bill or in the doling out of grants to the West Indies by which their trade can be saved, so long as they are determined to tie their life up with the production of sugar. The West Indies sugar planters are demoralised. They were demoralised by slavery, and have never been able to rise to a conception of modern methods, of enterprise, or of improved machinery as other sugar-producing countries have done. Java produces sugar at 6s., Cuba produces it at 7s., yet the West Indies cannot produce it under 8s. or 9s. a cwt. I do not believe you will get them out of their difficulties by any system of state doles. It requires a new generation. Even then the West Indies will not be revived by sugar, but rather by fruits or by cotton. In support of my contention that this will not save the West Indies, let me read the testimony of Sir Henry Jackson, governor of the Leeward Islands. He says—

> "What the effect of the abolition of bounties may prove to be in large colonies producing high-grade sugar is not for me to say, since the Leeward Islands are not among them, but it is only too certain that in these islands, producing only muscovado, and that by means of indifferent machinery, the immediate effect will be the reverse of beneficial."

He goes on to say—

> "It is absolutely certain, as shown by Dr. Morris, that directly muscovado and beet sugars come into open competition in the same market, as they must do on the abolition of bounties, the former trade must be annihilated unless the production can be improved. Even if the bounty system be continued, and the industry lingers on for a short time, it will be in a gradually diminishing condition, while with the abolition of bounties and without central factories, there will be an immediate stoppage on many of the largest estates."

I think that shows that this remedy will not be sufficient for the West Indies.

Then I come to the sugar refiners. They talk as though their industry was in danger of ruin. Let me read the prospectus issued by Messrs. Tate and Sons on March 4th of this year. Does this tell a tale of ruin?

> "Ever since its formation in 1859 the business has been eminently successful. The sugars have competed successfully with those of all makers of refined sugar, both British and foreign, notwithstanding the advantage possessed by the latter in the bounties given by the Governments of the countries of their production."

They go on to set forth the increased prosperity of the business, and finally they give a list of their profits for the last eight years, showing annual profits varying from £91,000 to £148,000, while in the year ending 30th of September, 1901—five months before the Sugar Convention was signed, and when they ought to have been at their last gasp—the profits of these poor oppressed sugar refiners amounted to no less than £215,000. There is testimony taken from the fountain head—continued, unbroken, and increasing prosperity, and a share capital of one million pounds offered to the public for subscription. I think that disposes of the sugar refiners.

AN HON. MEMBER: That is only one of them.

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES: But even if the claims of the West Indies and of the sugar refiners were as sound as I believe them to be unfounded, I should still have a warm corner in my heart for the people at large in Great Britain; I should still claim cheap sugar for the poor; I should still have some feeling in my breast for those large new industries, built up on cheap sugar, upon which, as I am credibly informed, no fewer than 250,000 persons depend for their livelihood; and I should still appeal to the Government not lightly to sacrifice the interests of those persons to what I believe to be an entirely mistaken idea that they can either revive the West Indies or increase the tremendous prosperity of English sugar refiners by making sugar dearer, as they propose to do by this Bill.

I will now go rapidly over the Convention. Its purpose is stated in the preamble. The various Powers having met, this was declared to be their object—

> "Desiring on the one hand to equalise the conditions of competition between beet and cane sugar from various countries, and on the other hand to promote the cousumption of sugar."

Let us see how that purpose is carried out. By the first Article, all the contracting Powers agree to suppress bounties on sugar and sugar products within their own borders. Let the House not suppose that this Bill and this Convention affect only sugar. In the language of the Convention and of our own Customs tariff "sugar" inclues all products into which sugar enters. It includes biscuits, milk, rose petals, violets, and even blacking, and the House will hardly credit the fact that it also includes Angostura bitters. The subject therefore is an extremely large one. The second article provides for refining sugar in bond; the third provides that the surtax, which represents the difference between the import duty and the excise duty, shall not exceed 2s. 6d. per cent.; the fourth article, which is the most important in the Convention, provides that each contracting State shall place upon bounty-fed sugar and sugared products a countervailing duty equal to that which is decided to be the bounty given. That decision rests with the permanent Commission, which has two duties—first, to pronounce whether the contracting States do or do not observe the obligation not to give bounties; and, secondly, to decide whether non-contracting States give bounties, and if so, to what extent. In the case of the contracting States if the permanent Commission decide that they do give bounties, a reference has to be made to a conference of all the Powers concerned, with which the final decision rests. But in the case of a non-contracting State the permanent Commission decide out of hand without appeal and without conference, and their decision is "executive," and must be carried out by every one of the contracting States within two months. Finally, by Protocol A 2, this country is bound to give no preference to colonial sugars as against sugar from contracting States. The effect of all this must be to achieve dear sugar by giving a monopoly of the supply in this country to the contracting States. I have been amazed at the way in which the negotiations for the conclusion of the Convention were conducted. They were muddled and hurried; the negotiators were ordered to hurry over important matters like the cartel because if the abolition of the cartel was insisted upon, the Convention would not be obtained. To crown the whole business, the Convention was submitted to this House in a translation so admittedly false that upon my representations the Foreign Office had to withdraw it and issue a new translation. But it was on the first and false translation, supported at last by the Closure, that the decision of this House was asked and taken, and that, forsooth, is the debate upon whch the Prime Minister relies when he says that the principle of this Bill has been already accepted by the House.

This Convention differs wholly from the proposals made by the Colonial Secretary for the conduct of the fiscal affairs of this country. The idea of the right hon. Gentleman is to tax the foreigner for the benefit of the Englishman, and to prefer the colonies to all the word besides, excepting—though I am not sure whether he would not include—England. This Convention will relieve the foreigner from taxation which he now bears, it will prohibit us from carrying out the most beneficient ideas of the Colonial Secretary in the way of giving a preference to the colonies, and instead of increasing the industry and prosperity of the Empire, it will tend to make sugar dearer and seriously to hamper, and perhaps to crush, the new industries which have been created. Let the House remember that this is all to be done for the profit of a very few States with Germany at their head. It is a strange fact that to the conferences on which this Convention was founded one of the States most interested in the production of sugar, and which will yet be a competitor in this market—the United

States—was not even invited. I do not know whether Switzerland was invited, but at any rate she did not come in, and in the confectionery trade Switzerland, who will prove a serious competitor, will continue to enjoy sugar as cheap as she can get it. The Colonial Secretary's scheme is entirely inconsistent with this Convention. He attaches great importance, as do I, to the action and the judgment of the self-governing colonies. What is their judgment about this Convention? Every one of them has refused to receive it or to adopt it. Every one of them, and India as well. Moreover, no sooner was the Convention signed than we ourselves began to repudiate it. Article 4 binds us to impose countervailing duties upon every country that gives bounties. It applies to every country or colony in the world. It makes no exception. By myself and others it was at once pointed out that that would include the colonies. Upon this, the Government, although it had signed the Convention and had pledged itself to this Article 4, began to proclaim that they would never impose countervailing duties upon colonial sugar, and when subsequently they came to ratify the Convention, they repudiated their own signature and made a special reservation which entirely cut the ground away from Article 4, and was, in fact, a repudiation of that Article. I am not sure even that view will suffice to protect the self-governing colonies. From an answer given by the President of the Board of Trade it appears that the Australian surtax is from 7s. to 9s., but the limit fixed by the Convention is 2s. 6d. per cwt. Taking that in conjunction with the solemn, and as yet unrepudiated obligation not to give preference to colonial sugar, how can you admit the Australian sugar as bounty-fed without giving a preference to that sugar? It will still be necessary to repudiate the Protocol which binds you not to give any preference to sugar coming from your colonies, as you have already repudiated Article 4.

Not only have we repudiated the Convention in one of its most important articles, but we have consistently violated—and His Majesty's Government propose to continue to violate—the most-favoured-nation clause of our treaties in general. That clause binds us to admit the growth, produce, and manufactures of the country in question on as favourable terms as those of any other country whatever. We have that clause with no fewer than twenty-one countries which are not signatories to the Convention. Amongst them are Japan and the United States — Japan our new ally, and the United States our dear cousins; and we are going to disregard the most-favoured nation clause and to violate, in their case and in every other, whenever it comes into conflict with the new notion set up by this Convention. The favoured-nation clause has given us priceless advantages. It has always been recognised as the great bulwark and the necessary condition of our foreign trade. It has hitherto been jealously observed. So strongly, so earnestly, and so completely has every English Government hitherto desired to observe the most-favoured-nation clause that when accidently any infraction of it has been made we have made amends and have actually returned the duties levied under a mistake. In 1838 a duty was levied on beeswax from the United States, and the duty was repaid to the full. In 1884 a duty was levied on skins and hides from Sweden and that duty was also repaid to the full. In 1845 a duty was levied on rice from the United States, and that duty, because and only because it had been levied contrary to the most-favoured-nation clause, was also repaid in full. And now it is contended by the Government that to put countervailing duties on sugar from Russia or to prohibit it from entering this country is no infraction of the most-favoured-nation clause. That is entirely contrary to the opinion of the law officers of the Crown of 1880. In that year the law officers of the Crown gave a considered opinion that any such act was a contravention of the most-favoured-nation clause. It is said that the present law officers have given a contrary opinion, but it has never been cited or quoted, and when I challenged the First Lord of the Treasury as to whether this was the opinion of all the three law officers of the Crown he did not answer. That left in my mind the impression that it was not the opinion of all those three law officers, but only the opinion of one of them. That opinion has never been laid upon the Table. We know the precise effect of the opinion of 1880, and if there be another opinion in a contrary direction we do not know its exact terms or whether it is concurred in—which I very much doubt—by all the law officers of the Crown. I believe that my right hon. friends the Attorney-General and the Solicitor-General are far too good international lawyers to concur in any such opinion. Meantime we have declared to Russia that we will apply this penalising treatment to her sugar even although it may be a repudiation of the most-favoured-nation clause. Russia claims that it is an absolute violation of the most-favoured-nation clause to treat her sugar like this. We denied this, and then Russia offered to submit it to the Hague Tribunal. If ever there was a subject with which that tribunal is fitted to deal, it is this. But His Majesty's Government refused, and said they would pay no attention to this strenuous protest. As to the Permanent Commission which sits at Brussels to order us to prohibit this sugar and admit that, I can only liken it to that secret trade tribunal the Vehmgerichte, which existed in the Middle Ages, such is its absolute power over our fiscal relations as far as sugar is concerned. It is to be remembered that the system established by the Convention is departed from and altered very much by the scheme of His Majesty's Government embodied in this Bill. The original idea embodied in the Convention is that you should levy upon the bounty-giving country a duty that would counter-balance the bounty. The first report of the Commission upon this question shows that the bounties vary from about 8d. per cwt. to something like 10s. per cwt. The object of the countervailing duties fixed by the Permanent Commission is to equalise competition; but our way of carrying out the Convention under this Bill is to prohibit alike the sugar of the State which gives a bounty of 8d. and of the State which gives 10s. There is no equalisation of competition in this; there is only a blind general closing of our ports for the advantage and the monoply of Germany principally and the other contracting States—for whom alone this our great market will be reserved by the Bill. My great objection to an International Commission is that this country should not be placed in any way under the orders of a foreign body consisting of ten foreigners and one Englishman, the ten foreigners all being interested in the maintenance of this monopoly.

Even now it seems to be entirely uncertain as to what we are going to do. France has declared that she cannot change her law by the 1st September. What is the Government going to do? Are they going to prohibit French sugars after the 1st September? It has been declared by the Permanent Commission that the Contingent Law, which is the cartel system of Austria and Hungary, is not in harmony with the Convention. The right hon. Gentleman says he has every reason to believe that the law of Austria and Hungary will be brought into harmony with the Convention. For what reason? The right hon. Gentleman gave no reason, and I have every reason to believe exactly the contrary, because there is a telegram in *The Times* from its usually extremely well-informed Vienna correspondent, who says—

> "Dr. von Böhm Bawerk, Minister of Finance, yesterday approached the Hungarian Government with a view to the substitution of some new arrangement for the State allotment system, which has been condemned by the Brussels Commission. He also seems to have met with meagre success. In regard to the tariff, the Hungarians cry, 'No changes without compensation!' and in regard to sugar decline to forego any part of the 300,000 quintals allotted to their refineries as a *douceur* to induce them to accept the allotment law. It may safely be predicted that the Hungarian Government will consent to no new arrangement that does not exclude foreign, and especially Austrian, sugar from the Hungarian market."

Will my right hon. friend tell me what reason he has for believing that the Austria-Hungarian Governments will bring their legislation and arrangements into harmony with the Convention, as they are not in harmony at present? I can get no information upon this point, and the right hon. Gentleman does not volunteer any reason. In the face of that I am bound to believe the information published by the well-informed correspondent of *The Times.* I wish to know if the Government are going to prohibit sugar that comes from Austria and Hungary after the 1st September? I am not going into the difficulties which have been put forward by the hon. Member opposite as to certificates of origin. According to the Bill not a single pound of sugar can come into this country without a certificate of origin. There never was a system of certificates of origin that did not absolutely break down, and this will break down. When we gave a preference to Canadian over Baltic timber, the Baltic timber was shipped over there and the certificate of origin was afterwards forthcoming. The same thing was done in regard to certificates of origin in Spain, for the Spanish merchants found that their trade was carried on in exactly the same way. Therefore the Government could not rely upon certificates of origin.

There is one last thing I desire to say, and it is that the whole of this intended equalisation of competition is going to be defeated by the new cartels. I think it was on the 18th July that a new cartel was made between Russia, Austria, and some of the other signatories, to this Convention, with the avowed purpose of limiting their output of sugar in order to keep up the price in England. In these circumstances I do not see how the President of the Board of Trade can say that the price of sugar in future will not exceed £10 per ton.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I said the average price.

*MR. GIBSON BOWLES: It will exceed that price if these cartel-making countries can effect it, and they avow that they intend to effect it if they can. I do not know how you can limit them to that price when you have given them a monopoly without competition from outside. I do not know at what heights they may establish it. To my mind the whole thing is a profound mistake. It has been marked by bungling and repudiation of other most solemn engagements such as has never been seen before or heard of in the history of the British Government. Its end must be to establish a monopoly which must be injurious to England, and from which England can gain no profit whatever. It will shatter our trade, strangle a growing industry, close a market, except to monopolists, which has always hitherto been open, and make dearer for us sugar which it is in our interest to get cheap. But there is still a place of repentance left to His Majesty's Government. I had formed great hopes of His Majesty's Government in this session. I brought to their notice a mistake they had made in regard to the Baghdad Railway, and in seventeen days they retreated from the position they hitherto held and most fortunately and wisely retraced their steps and abandoned their policy. Let them do that on this occasion. The Bill is not a pressing one for us. We have nothing to gain from it. The Convention is a very bad one for us. Let them give up the Bill and repudiate the Convention. It is provided for in the Convention itself by Article 12. If instead of that they press the Bill through by the aid of a powerful Government majority, if they impose on this House by that majority, as the initial step in their policy of dear food, dear sugar—to be followed by dear corn and dear meat—then I say they will incur a grave responsibility before the country, and they will also cause a most profound distrust of themselves.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day three months.'"—(*Mr. Lough.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

MR. WYLIE (Dumbartonshire): I have listened with much interest to the speech delivered by my hon. friend the Member for King's Lynn in support of the Amendment, but I hope in the course of my remarks to show the complete fallacy of some of the arguments. I support the Second Reading of the Bill for the following reasons—because it is a too long delayed measure of justice to a large number of employers and workmen connected with the sugar industry, both at home and in the colonies, who have been too long crushed by the conditions hitherto prevailing. I believe it will add greatly to the trade of the United Kingdom, not only in sugar but in a great variety of products which the increased prosperity of the colonial and home sugar industry will necessitate. I support it as a measure of sound policy for securing the permanent cheapness of sugar by preserving the most powerful and reliable competition to beet sugar, which has lately been becoming a most dangerous monopoly. I support it in the interest of universal free trade. Let me refer to each of these points in a little more detail, and in the order in which I have mentioned them. For more than forty years a large number of the sugar manufacturers and the producers of sugar in the colonies have been crushed by a gigantic system of protection, one of the most obnoxious and injurious forms of protection, namely, in the shape of sugar bounties, from which it is proposed by this measure to relieve them. Hon. and right hon. Gentlemen oppose it, but surely the British workman, whose products have been shut out of almost every market in the world by hostile tariffs, is entitled to demand at least fair play, if no favour, in his own country. If we deny preferential treatment to the colonies we are bound at least to give them that equality of treatment which will place them on a level with their Continental competitors, and which if they had been self-governing instead of Crown colonies they would long ago have secured for themselves This appears to be a matter of justice, and it was very ably stated by Mr. Gladstone, who persistently opposed bounties, when he said that while we were bound to observe the principles of equity towards foreign countries we were bound to observe the principles of equity towards our own countrymen. I am sorry to see that hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite deny this equality of treatment to our own workmen on the plea that it will increase the price of sugar by a halfpenny per pound. It is a pity that to-day the policy the old champions of free trade advocated is so much spoken against by hon. and right hon. Gentlemen opposite. The argument that the price of sugar will be increased by a halfpenny per pound is founded on an erroneous assumption. They say that this policy will injure the jam and confectionery trades by increasing the price to the extent of a halfpenny per pound. But in the meantime let me say that those trades which have so successfully resisted foreign competition in other respects will be able to survive. I believe cheaper sugar will be obtained for them under this arrangement. It is quite certain that by the aid of the cartel the complete extinction of the cane sugar industry would have been accomplished but for the intervention of the United States.

Hitherto we have pursued a short-sighted policy in this matter. The total disregard of everything except cheapness has been one of the great fallacies in connection with our support of the bounty system. The bounty giving system is a total disregard of the principles of political economy. I suppose therefore in the interest of free trade this is the greatest measure since the repeal of the Corn Laws. We all know what free trade in corn did for corn. Apprehension has been expressed that free trade in sugar will have quite the contrary effect.

SIR JAMES JOICEY (Durham, Chester-le-Street): I listened with considerable interest to the speech of the hon. Gentleman who has just sat down, because when he first began he made a declaration that it was his intention to prove that the arguments of the mover and seconder of the Amendment were perfectly fallacious. I confess that, with all the care I have been able to use, I have not heard one solid argument to show that my hon. friends, statements were fallacious at all. I must congratulate the mover and seconder of the Amendment upon the very excellent speeches they have delivered to the House, and I am bound to say that no case was made out for the Bill by the right hon. Gentlemen who moved its Second Reading. Every argument of the President of the Board of Trade was completely riddled by the hon. Members for Islington and King's Lynn. I cannot see any justification for this Bill being brought into the House by the Government. Now, I am a free trader. I admit that there are advantages and disadvantages in connection with any tariff system which you may adopt. I recognise that in all tariff systems there is a balance of good on one side, and a balance of evil on the other side; but I confess that I cannot see where the balance of good comes in in connection with the system proposed in the Bill. Personally, as a free trader, I am opposed to bounties, but there are many Governments which give bounties on articles other than sugar. The French give bounties on ships ; are the Government prepared to adopt the same course in regard to these bounties as in regard to the bounties on sugar ? I could hardly think that the Government would take that course. It is said that the Bill to abolish bounties is introduced for the purpose of benefiting our West Indian Islands, which send 47,000 tons of sugar to this country. But we receive 1,800,000 tons of sugar from other countries ; and I cannot help thinking that if the Government were really anxious to benefit the West Indies, they would have brought forward a grant in aid to the West Indies, which would represent an additional price to their 47,000 tons of sugar, rather than impose a duty on all sugar which comes from the various countries of Europe and elsewhere. We have heard the President of the Board of Trade make a good many statements as to what would be the effect of the policy of this Bill, but I confess, looking at the point as a business man, I am not very certain that the prophesies of the right hon. Gentleman will be realised. I feel sure that the President of the Board of Trade is not in a position to look into the future any more than any other Member in the House, and I do not put the slightest value whatever on his prophecy that the average price of sugar, if the Bill becomes law, will be only £10 per ton. The Government ought to have made an overwhelming case in favour of their policy before bringing in this Bill, but I have listened to the debates both on the Convention and on this Bill, and I fail to see any justification whatever for the policy which they have adopted. I have not yet been able to get a grip of the position of the right hon. Gentleman the Colonial Secretary, because he seems to have one policy one day, which he modifies the next. But if this Bill becomes law, the right hon. Gentleman will not be able to carry out one portion of his policy which he has foreshadowed—viz., to give preferential duties to our colonies in regard to sugar.

I represent a very large working-class constituency, and come from a district in the north of England which has 1,200,000 inhabitants, where the co-operative system is carried on to a great extent with extreme success. Now all the co-operative societies are thoroughly opposed to this Bill, and I believe that the working classes throughout the country, as a whole, do not imagine that they will get any benefit out of a measure of this kind. I thoroughly agree with the hon. Member for Islington that the large number of industries which depend to a large extent for their prosperity on cheap sugar will be seriously injured if this Bill is passed. I also agree with the hon. Member for King's Lynn that the Bill puts the complete control of our sugar industries into the hands of a Commission of twelve men, only one of whom represents this country, the remainder representing countries which will be benefited by the abolition of the bounties. In fact, I believe that the Bill will be most disastrous to this country, and I shall do my best to prevent its passing into law. I shall oppose it at every stage, and I hope that its opponents in this House will also resist it at every stage so that the country may become thoroughly alive to the mischief with which the Government threatens the country.

*MR. WHITE RIDLEY (Stalybridge): The hon. Members who moved and seconded the Amendment have made a great parade of the glorious principles of free trade, and given thier own personal opinion as to the effect of this measure. I wish to draw the attention of the House to the peculiar position in which they find themselves. Here is a practical opportunity of securing free trade in sugar, but because some protectionists support the Bill they would reject it. That position is illogical. If the Convention is not for free trade in sugar I would like to know what it is for. The natural, and indeed inevitable, result of trying to apply rigid economic theories to practical, work-a-day life is to land yourselves in difficulties. Those who have a great dislike to bounties are the very people who absolutely refuse to abolish them. They refuse to take the only practical means to abolish them because, forsooth, there are certain industries in the country which have made a great stir about the matter, and which assert that they will be ruined by the Bill if it becomes law. Those who oppose the Bill have discovered a newly awakened interest in the consumer. They rest their case on the plea that the Bill will raise the price of sugar, and that their industries depend upon cheap sugar. I entirely controvert the proposition that their prosperity depends wholly on cheap sugar, because, when these industries were built up and became prosperous, sugar was twice the price it is now. They waxed fat and prospered when sugar was at £20 per ton, and when sugar has been reduced from £20 per ton to £8 per ton they complain that a very small rise which may take place in the price of sugar will injure their interests.

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the debate stood adjourned till this Evening's Sitting.

EVENING SITTING.

SUGAR CONVENTION BILL.

Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Amendment to Question [28th July], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Which Amendment was—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day three months.'"—(*Mr. Lough.*)

Question again proposed, "That the word 'now" stand part of the Question."

Debate resumed.

*MR. WHITE RIDLEY: I was pointing out when the dinner interval interrupted me that jam, biscuit, and aerated water manufacturers had not so much to gain by cheap sugar as is imagined. They were able to make large profits when sugar was £20 a ton, and they cannot complain if sugar which is now £8 should rise to £10 a ton. The demand those interested in these industries are making is this—that those who have practically enjoyed a bounty for many years should be still allowed to enjoy that bounty when the Government have an opportunity of getting rid of it; n t only that, but when the figures are examined we find that the consumption of sugar in this country induced by the industries which are concerned increased rather more during the early part of their prosperity, when sugar was dearer, than later. I take the average price from 1872 to 1885, fourteen years, and I find it was 28s. a cwt. Then I take the years from 1889 to 1897, when it was 16s. a cwt., or 12s. less, and I find during the former period the consumption of sugar increased by 37,000 tons, whilst in the latter period it only increased by 19,000 tons, so that when sugar was 28s. a cwt. the annual consumption of sugar increased at a very much greater rate than when it was only 16s. a cwt. Therefore I venture to say that these industries which make so great an outcry are greatly mistaken in thinking that they will not be able to maintain their prosperity if sugar should go up in price. One of the first conditions of a successful trade is a regular market and regular prices; and everybody who looks through the variation in the price of sugar during the past many years, will see at once that industries such as these, which depend on a regular supply of sugar, could not look for prosperity when the variations were so great. I find that in the last twenty years the variations in the price in the course of one year have never been less than 1s. 2d. per cwt., and during the last three years 3s. per cwt.; a variation in the course of one year of about one-third of the whole of the price of the cwt. A variation so great as that is not one which ought to induce these trades to think such a condition of affairs would lead to their permanent prosperity. If you take any year you like from 1882 to 1902 you find these enormous variations in the price of the raw material upon which these industries depend, and I say that the very industries that can gain, or ought to gain, by this Convention, which, whatever it does, will steady the price of sugar, will be these industries which complain.

Turning to the case of the general consumer. The hon. Member for King's Lynn seemed very disturbed at what he called the monopoly created by this Convention. I say so far from creating any monopoly this Convention abolishes monopoly. I was at a loss to understand what the hon. Member meant by monopoly, and was not enlightened by his speech. I find that the monopoly for supplying this country is gradually falling into the hands of Germany and Austria-Hungary; 68 per cent. of our refined sugar and 35 per cent. of our raw sugar came from those countries in 1900; and taking the year 1902 I find the proportion of 68 per cent. of refined sugar has increased to 72 per. cent. and that the 38 per cent. of raw sugar has increased to 53 per cent. When you find two countries whose borders adjoin dealing in the same produce and adopting the same policy, and when you find those countries supplying this country with 72 per cent. of refined sugar and 53 per cent. of raw sugar I am certain the House will agree with me in thinking we are rapidly approaching a time when Germany and Austria-Hungary will have a monopoly. The hon. Member for King's Lynn thinks the same monopoly will exist under this Bill, and thinks the surtax on the sugar, or the difference between Customs and Excise duties will allow those countries to maintain that monopoly. I do not see how his opinion can stand against the deliberate opinion of the Convention. You find in the opinion of the Convention that the maximum surtax they propose to allow in the future is enough to stop any monopoly in these countries. What will be the real effect on the price of sugar? It is quite possible, and indeed probable, that the price will not fall below the cost of production; but the utmost rise there can be will be a rise to the normal price of sugar, and I do not see that any section of the community can complain if the price is raised to its normal state. And I venture to say the normal price of sugar has been very little affected by the bounties. The lowering of the price of sugar by the bounties has been infinitesimal. The main cause of the reduction has not been the bounties but increased facilities of production incidental to modern ingenuity. The hon. Member for West Islington said, when it was a question of making a grant to the West Indies, that the price of sugar has not been affected to any extent by the bounties, and when the hon. Member says that, it is reasonable to suppose the abolition of the bounties will not cause a large increase of price. The fact is that the extremely low price of sugar during the last ten years is due not to the bounties but the extreme over production caused by the bounties. Hon. Members may think that if the price of sugar was reduced by whatever means, it might be a very satisfactory thing; but on glancing over the prices of sugar we find the result of the low price of sugar is a tendency to alternate to a high price. It is an artificial system of alternating prices, upon which no country can have any confidence whatever.

It is said we have given the consumers £8,000,000, but it cannot be said that the whole of these bounties go into the consumers' pockets. Suppose the West Indies can sell sugar in this country at £10 a ton, and Germany can produce it at £8 15s., and that they obtain a bounty of £4 or £5, the German producer does not reduce his price to the extent of the whole of the bounty but only to such an extent as to enable him to undersell the West Indies, and puts the rest into his own pocket; therefore I cannot see how it can be said that this £8,000,000 goes into the pockets of the consumer. These bounties have not been responsible for the great decrease in the price of sugar; that has been affected by other causes. If the bounties were abandoned to-morrow the other causes would remain, and the reduction in price would still continue. Supposing sugar returns to the normal price, we might naturally expect that in competition induced by free trade the sugar would lower its price. Not merely the West Indies will benefit, but there are large areas in Central America which will also profit by the Convention. Experience has shown that sugar could be produced profitably in England if there were no bounty to compete with it. There is one circumstance that will prevent sugar reaching its normal price for some time. There are very large stocks held by producers of beet sugar, and when those enormous stocks are got rid of it will to a large extent prevent any increase in the price of sugar. What was the meaning of the private convention of the sugar producers on the Continent. It was that they had got enormous stocks on hand, stocks amounting to something like 2,500,000 tons, and that they had to face the reduction caused by the abolition of the bounties. It will be said that the West Indies will not be great gainers if the price of sugar does not go beyond its normal price; but those who make that remark are those who have not studied the conditions in the West Indies. Those who have read the Blue-book published by the Colonial Office on this question, will know that what is feared in the West Indies is not the actual price now but the price in the future. If they look at the Blue-book they will see that the merchants who are in the habit of lending money to the cane growers on their future crops, refused to lend further money, because the bounties prevented the profitable growing of cane sugar. That is why the West Indies has not been able to get on. It is because they could not get the capital to go on with, and this is a matter of the utmost importance for the consideration of the House. This question involves the discontinuation of the system so prejudicial to the West Indies, which practically prohibited the exportation of their sugar. We have granted preferential duties, not to the West Indies but to Continental countries, and I should venture to think the people of this country will be inclined to say if we are to grant these privileges at all we should grant them to our colonies and not to foreign countries; and they will be the first to realise that what in the end will be the cheapest sugar will be that supplied in regular competition with all nations under the sun. To suppose the people of this country are not capable of appreciating that seems to me to be gambling, not on the food but on the intelligence of the people.

With regard to the other chief objection which is raised to this Amendment. It is said we are placing our fiscal system under foreign control. It is an utter travesty of the situation to say so. This foreign board is one on which the British have an equal vote, or a more than equal vote, to that of the rest, and they have quite as much reason to see that the Convention is properly carried out as anyone. It is not to the interest of France that Germany should go on granting bounties when she has abolished them, or to the interest of Germany that Austria-Hungary should go on when she has abolished them. It is the business of the Convention to decide what they shall give a bounty to, and what they shall not, and whether such sugar shall be excluded from the English market. The amount of sugar excluded will only be one-fortieth part of the supply, and it is a travesty of the situation to say that the exclusion of one-fortieth of the supply of sugar to this country is to render the food of the people dear. It is an utter absurdity which only has to be mentioned to show its falsity. This question is no doubt part of the larger one. It is, as the right hon. Gentleman said, some sign of the storm which is to break over us soon, but I venture to think those who are opposing any fiscal reform are those who ought to support the Convention. Nations, in their conflict with each other, can resort either to arms or to fiscal weapons. Neither of these methods appeal to those hon. Members who oppose this Convention. They approve of international agreement. This is an international agreement, and as such they ought to support it. Far from being a retrograde measure, and one which this country will not participate in, I believe it is one of which the people of this country will unanimously approve. I believe the country will approve of this Convention, and heartily endorse the action the Government have so courageously taken in its support.

Mr. CAWLEY (Lancashire, Prestwich): I think the hon. Member opposite has proved too much. He seems to think that he knows more about the real interests of the consumers of sugar in this country than the consumers themselves. Surely an enormous trade, such as the jam and confectionery trade, are able to take care of their own interests; they certainly know as much about the matter as the hon. Member opposite, and they are unanimous in their demand that they should be allowed to buy their principal material in the cheapest market. The hon. Member says we do not get the whole of the bounty. That is possibly so, because the producer of beet sugar in Germany in normal times makes a profit, and so pockets some of it. But they are in competition with one another, and when there is a glut in the market the producer has to give not only his bounty but something else as well. The whole thing seems so simple that it is difficult to understand why the Government are taking this course. Unless reasons are brought forward which have not yet been adduced, it is impossible for me to understand it. I know something of business, and to me the case seems to be this. These Continental countries want the votes of the agriculturists; they have influence brought to bear upon them to give a bounty for growing beet sugar, and in order to propitiate certain people they give the bounty. The bounty stimulates production; so much sugar is grown that it has to be dumped down here, often at a loss. Who pays that loss? The consumers in Germany, France, and Austria-Hungary pay a big price so that our people here can get sugar at a low price. In other words, the working classes of those countries take so much money out of their pockets and present it to our working people. That is what the Government propose to stop. Sugar is often sold here at 3s. below cost price, and how anybody can say that we are not gainers by that I cannot understand. This Convention will prevent sugar coming at such a low price, and according to the hon. Member for Stalybridge it is better for the jam trade that they should pay 10s. instead of 6s. per cwt. for their sugar.

*Mr. WHITE RIDLEY: No.

Mr. CAWLEY: The President of the Board of Trade said that in future he thought the price would average 10s.

*Mr. WHITE RIDLEY: The maximum.

Mr. CAWLEY: No, the average.

The PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY to the BOARD of TRADE (Mr. Bonar Law, Glasgow, Blackfriars): He said, provided the cost of production remained the same.

Mr. CAWLEY: What I understood him to say was that if this Bill passes the chances are that the average price of sugar will be 10s. It can now frequently be obtained at 6s. What is the advantage of this? It is to enable the West Indies to make a profit. I say that it would be cheaper for us to give the West Indies a million or two per annum direct than to try to give them this advantage in such a roundabout way. The attempt to bolster up a trade in this way, by increasing the price, will not stand looking into. One of our principal competitors in this matter is Switzerland. Switzerland will be able to get sugar dumped down in her country, and to produce confectionery at a lower price than we shall. At present we get sugar from Germany and France below cost; we manipulate it, make it into jam and sweetstuffs, and actually ship back their own sugar at a profit. That the Government want to do away with. To my mind it is a suicidal policy, which will do very little good to the West Indies; it will injure an enormous and growing trade which is worked under the best conditions as to labour, and employs 250,000 hands; and the Government by persisting in their policy will do a very ill deed to the country.

Mr. PLATT-HIGGINS (Salford, N.): The hon. Member opposite has candidly admitted that he does not understand this subject.

Mr. CAWLEY: I said nothing of the sort. I said I understood business.

Mr. PLATT-HIGGINS: But not this business. I understood the hon. Member to rely on statements made to him by the trade, and he saw no reason why if cheap sugar were offered to them they should not take it. I do not know whether the hon. Member is a fisherman or not. If he is, he will be aware that the bait usually contains a hook, and there are two very obvious hooks in this cheap sugar. One is that under the condition which he so favours, the trade of this country, especially in connection with confectionery, is absolutely at the mercy of some regulation of the German Government giving their export bounty on confectionery instead of on raw sugar. I doubt whether that is a prospect which the confectionery trade can contemplate with equanimity. The next is the monopoly which the Germans now enjoy, and to which I will allude presently. A great deal has been said about the Convention putting a burden on the consumers of this country. In my constituency we have neither refineries nor jam manufactories, nor are we in the slightest way concerned with the West Indies; consequently I am supporting this Convention absolutely in the interests of the consumer. It is said that the abolition of bounties must raise the price of sugar by the amount of the bounties. That is the fallacy of the Cobden Club leaflet, No. 120. That leaflet sets out that Germany, Holland, and Belgium give us so much, and it totals up the amount at £2,770,000, which it says is a free gift, and asks why we should not have it. It is not always easy to upset predictions, but it is sometimes easy to upset statements as to the past. That leaflet refers to 1898, and it is easy to show that its argument is a fallacy. In that year, the average price of beet was 9s. 7d. f.o.b. Hamburg, or 10s. 3d. delivered in London. The cost of making sugar is 8s.9d. Therefore those countries not only did not give us a penny of that large sum, but they made a profit of 1s. 6d. per cwt. out of us. Hon. Members who talk of the burden on the consumer would do well to study these subjects. Then there is a leaflet of the National Liberal Federation in which we are told that by this Convention we shall lose £8,500,000 a year. That is based on the supposition that we should lose the benefit of 5s. a cwt. on the 1,500,000 tons that we receive. But hon. Members opposite know very well that if two men on the Manchester Exchange offer to sell an article, one at 8s. 6d., and the other at 8s. 9d., and the one at 8s. 9d. has an illegitimate bargain of 5s. up his sleeve, the latter does not say that because he has that 5s. he will offer his article at 3s. 9d.; he tries it at 8s. 5d., and probably books the order, so that instead of getting 5s. the buyer gets 4d., and that is where the mistake of the National Liberal Federation comes in. It is said that you cannot upset the statement of Sir H. Norman that there would be an advance of ½d. in the pound. But the whole of that passage is very seldom read. It was made nearly six years ago, and is as follows:—

> "It must be admitted that if countervailing duties are levied, and have the desired effect, the people of the United Kingdom will have to pay more for their sugar than they do at present, perhaps to the extent of ½d a pound."

There is a good deal of qualification about that "perhaps." What was the price in 1897? It was 8s. 9d. f.o.b. Hamburg, or 9s. 5d. delivered in London. A rise of ½d. a pound would mean 14s. 5d. Will any member of the House bet a hat that the price of sugar will rise to 14s. 5d. this winter? This is a great struggle, not between the West Indies and Germany, but between cane sugar and beet sugar all over the world. I am utterly amazed that hon. Members opposite should constitute themselves the champions of a German monopoly. Germany enjoys an almost exclusive monopoly in the production of beet sugar. In 1893 the consumption in the United Kingdom of beet sugar from all quarters of the world was 1,000,000 tons; the consumption of cane sugar was 373,000 tons. In 1902 the consumption of beet sugar had risen to 1,400,000 tons, and that of sugar cane had fallen to 176,000 tons. Can any man of common sense say that it is to the interest of this country that cane sugar, which is the better sugar, should be driven from the country in this fashion? That is the attitude of hon. Members opposite. The hon. Member for West Islington took pride in showing how cane sugar was being driven even out of the West Indies. I see nothing to rejoice at in it. Rather is it to the interest of this country to stimulate the production of cane sugar, so that it may form a more powerful rival to beet sugar. The arguments of hon. Members seem to be based entirely on the fact that the price of sugar in 1902 was about 6s. But that was an abnormal state, and an abnormal state is in its essence temporary, and I say it is not to the interests of this country that the sugar supply should remain in that state. Some years ago American lard fell to 17s. a cwt., at which price it ceased to pay, and the production fell off. A trust in America got possession of the market, and the price has risen from 17s. to 58s. Are we to be exposed to a catastrophe like that? Yet that is the practical effect of the 6s. argument.

The danger of monopoly is one of the greatest dangers threatening this country. In Manchester we have a very familiar example in the sewing cotton trade. That trade is in the hands of a combination. Does that combination make use of the fact to give cotton at the cheapest price? Not a bit of it. They use their monopoly to put dividends in the pockets of their shareholders, and their shares stand at an enormous price. It is asked, "But if prices rise, why does not competition come in?" Because it dare not. If it did the combination would come down and swamp it as easily and as ruthlessly as a farmer's wife wrings the neck of a chicken. As to the German monopoly, here is a report of a meeting of the United Alkali Company, held in Liverpool this year, at which the chairman bemoaned his hard fate. He said:—

> "The English manufacturer has to fight an unfair battle for his own home market. To meet this difficulty the company had had for two years an agreement with the German makers as to the quantity they should export to the markets of the world, including this country. When the agreement came up for renewal for the present year the representative of the German manufacturers insisted that a large increase in the total quantity assigned to them must be made, and that the United Alkali Company should undertake not to sell for consumption in Germany and Switzerland, and, further, that rights should be given to the German makers to sell in our own home market and in the United States at a difference in price in favour of German bleaching powder which would give them power to undersell the company in those markets."

Is that a state of affairs we can contemplate with equanimity? Yet it is a state of affairs which would be actually brought about. It is said that we have received some benefits from the bounty system. I think we have, but the bounties have been a counterweight to the rise in the price of sugar which might have taken place had there been no competition. I want to show that the benefit must still accrue whether the bounties go on or not. The Germans, the French, and the Dutch have laid out enormous sums of money in the cultivation of the beetroot. They have established a trade which cannot stand still, but which they will be bound to continue for a certain period of time. They will be bound to give us the benefit of their supplies, whether they like it or not. They will not plough the land up. Looking at the matter from a common-sense point of view, it would be to the interest of this country that we should have, instead of one-tenth of cane and nine-tenths of beet sugar, half of each. If we distribute our production all over the world we shall be naturally on much safer ground. Bounties in their nature are like stimulants: there are times when stimulants may be given with advantage, but there comes a time when it is not safe to give them without serious danger to the patient. In my judgment that is the present state of affairs, but unfortunately those men who are so fond of bounties are like the dram drinkers who cannot give up dram drinking.

SIR JOHN GORST (Cambridge University): The first question which seems to arise is whether the House of Commons is free to exercise its judgment on the Second Reading of this Bill. The first Lord of the Treasury tells us that the Government has entered into a Convention which has been recognised by a vote of this House and therefore we are no longer free agents, and that we are bound to pass the Second Reading of this Bill merely to carry out the stipulations of a Convention already made. That seems to be a formidable argument. But, in the first place, the Convention itself reserves the right of the Legislature to consider this matter. Secondly, it must be remembered that the Resolution approving the Convention was passed at the end of an autumn session by the use of the closure and upon a document which was afterwards found to have been mistranslated. These circumstances justify the House in acting as if they were free agents. The last speaker talked as if those who were opposed to the Second Reading of the Bill were in favour of bounties. Nothing could be more incorrect. As a free trader I am strongly opposed to bounties. I think they form the very worst mode by which Government can interfere with the free course of trade, and I therefore rejoice that the countries of the Continent have seen the errors of their ways and are prepared to a certain limited extent to adopt the policy of abolition of bounties. But I am sorry to say that they reserve the surtax which is to have the effect of giving them the absolute monopoly of their own markets. If this had simply been an agreement on the part of the countries interested to abolish bounties, we should have had nothing but approbation, sympathy, and the strongest possible admiration for their conduct. But in this case something is asked of us. We are not only asked to applaud the abolition of the bounties but to take an active part in a considerable interference with the course of trade. When we are called upon to do that it becomes our duty to ask what interest have we in this matter.

Now, are our interests promoted by entering into engagements with regard to the sugar trade on the Continent? I wish to say a few words on two hypotheses: first, that the price of sugar will rise, and secondly, that it will not rise. I have the most profound distrust of the prophecies made by economists and by the Board of Trade as to what will be the effect of a proceeding of this kind. After all, the price of sugar depends originally on supply and demand and the causes which ultimately settle the price are of a very complicated nature. Suppose the price does not rise, the people of this country will get their sugar cheap. The consumers will not suffer at all, but those who have been hurt by the bounties will not get the advantage they anticipate under the Convention. The West Indian Islands will gain nothing. I confess that when I hear people crying out about the impossibility of carrying on an industry I always think it is owing to want of enterprise and skill in the conduct of that industry. I cannot help thinking that if a little of the energy and wisdom of Egypt were imported into the West Indian Islands there also the sugar industry would become profitable. Beet sugar cultivation was once tried in Egypt and it failed, so the agriculturists turned their attention to cane sugar and found it one of the most lucrative industries. Therefore it appears to me that if the price of sugar does not rise under the Convention nothing will be lost and, on the other hand, nothing will be gained. But suppose the price does rise. What will be the result? We know that there are cartels at work with a view to regulating the quantity of sugar to be placed on the market. If the price rises how shall we gain by it? In the first place, the great masses of the people will have to pay more for their sugar, which is an extremely serious matter, as it involves a diminution of the people's food. The raw material of the sugar industries will also rise in price. It is quite true, as has been pointed out, that a rise in the price of raw material does not necessarily destroy trade. But it disturbs it, and I think the House will admit it would be a great misfortune if a rise in the price of sugar should check the development and prosperity of a big trade. The only compensation for these evils—and it is a small one—is that the sugar-refining industry at home and the sugar cultivators of the West Indian Islands will be slightly benefited. The Bill affords an object lesson of the risks and dangers and difficulties which attend the making of fiscal arrangements with foreign countries to the disturbance of trade. It is an extremely important Bill for that reason, and I hope it will be fully discussed so that the country may see the dangers that are lurking under this kind of interference. The Government got into difficulties in making this Convention by agreeing to prohibit the importation of bounty-fed sugar, and when the time came for the ratification of the Convention it was found necessary to insert words providing that the protocol should not apply to British colonies.

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: We always intended that.

Sir JOHN GORST: Then it is a pity you did not make it clear in the first instance. It shows that, in entering into trade relations with foreign countries, we shall have to make exceptions in favour of our self-governing colonies. Again, it has been found that the Convention is a violation of the "most-favoured-nation" clause in commercial treaties. We know what the United States has had to say to that, while it is important to note that Russia has taken up the position that England, by entering into the Convention, has violated the most-favoured-nation treatment in the commercial treaties between the two countries. We have actually been driven to repudiate the arbitration of the Hague tribunal in this matter. It is certainly a very unfortunate position for us. Then the next thing to note is that the Government do not bring in all the members of the Empire. They have brought in the Crown colonies, but India has refused to come in. Yet India is completely under the control of the Government and Parliament of this country. Another difficulty is that if this Bill passes the House of Commons will become a body of log-rollers. I do not want to be personal or discourteous, but I must say that in the debate which took place in the autumn I thought I discerned some symptoms of incipient log-rolling, and this will certainly be one of the difficulties of the future under a system of commercial legislation of this kind. I have just one more objection to this kind of legislation. After all, the discussion of this Bill in this House is a purely academic affair, because the Bill will go elsewhere. By "elsewhere" I mean, not the House of Lords, but an assembly in Brussels consisting of ten foreigners and one Briton. That assembly, which will have to give the final decision, has already censured and disagreed with the legislation of Austria-Hungary and of France, and I suppose it will feel itself powerful enough to disagree with the legislation of Great Britain. As a member of the British Empire I strongly object to any kind of negotiations or agreement being entered into with foreign countries which interfere with the sovereign authority of the House of Commons and of Parliament. If we pass this Bill we shall have to refer it to the Belgium Commission to see whether it is pleased to approve of it, and if it is not approved then I suppose we shall have to amend it. It is this House which ought to decide whether or not we shall substitute total prohibition for countervailing duties.

MR. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.): I have kept an absolutely open mind on this question, for I have deemed it to be one on which we should endeavour to listen to all the arguments that can be adduced on either side. I have never addressed the House on it, and I entered the Chamber this evening with unusual curiosity and interest, looking forward to a full statement of the reasons which had induced the Government to take this exceptional and even unprecedented course. This is the first time we have ever subjected our legislation to foreign control, and, therefore, a strong case must be made out for it. I agree with the hon. Member for Stalybridge, who said we ought to study the interests of the consumers, but I confess I fail to see that he adduced any reason for the belief that the consumer would benefit under this Bill. He went on to say that he was opposed to monopolies. So are we, but it does not seem to us that the best way of stopping them is by prohibiting the importation of goods into this country. He told us later on that Germany was the enemy. I do not think he is right in that, for Germany has from the first been one of the countries willing to bring its legislation into conformity with that of other countries. The speech of the President of the Board of Trade was marked by much speculative thought but the right hon. Gentleman was unable to explain the difficulties which perplex our minds; he could not tell us what would happen if prices were raised and how the West Indies would benefit. The prophetic element was particularly strong in the speech of the President of the Board of Trade. The right hon. Gentleman laid stress on the absolute obligation of this country to carry out this Convention; but not only is the constitutional right of the Legislature explicitly reserved, but it is an axiom of all Parliamentary countries that no treaty requiring legislation can possibly have any effect or bind any country until after legislation has been passed. We were absolutely and perfectly free, and I cannot for a moment accept the suggestion of the right hon. Gentleman that we are bound in any way.

The right hon. Gentleman did not put before us any practical arguments. He discussed a good many interesting questions, but he did not tell us what are the practical gains that we are to expect from this Convention. I will try to supply the omission by asking what are the practical gains which are put before us by the agitators who have kept up the movement in favour of this Convention for more than twenty years? In the first place, they say it will promote free trade. That is a very strange argument to come from protectionists. This Bill is, as a matter of fact, promoted by protectionists. I do not include the President of the Board of Trade among the protectionists. The mental state of

Members of the Government has become a subject of absorbing interest to us on this side of the House, and we are only too delighted to have some little corner lifted of that veil which shrouds their intentions. I gather that the right hon. Gentleman is a free trader, and therefore I am sure it is in the interests of free trade that he has brought forward this Bill; but that is not the motive of the great bulk of the people who have been promoting the agitation against the sugar bounties. It is quite certain that Austria-Hungary, Germany, and France are not free traders, and that they intend to maintain their protectionist character. In one respect this Convention will be a set-back to free trade, because it establishes the surtax, and we have made ourselves parties to that surtax. There is nothing in the Convention to get rid of cartels, and I do not see any ground whatever for thinking that cartels will not be just as powerful, just as able to raise prices in their own country, just as able to "dump" goods in this country as they have been hitherto. We are not escaping from cartels in any way. The President of the Board of Trade and the advocates of the Convention have defined free trade for their own purposes as that which allows commodities to find their natural level. There is no reason to believe that in that sense there will be any more free trade in sugar than there has been hitherto. The President of the Board of Trade argued that the Convention would have the effect of steadying prices, and making trade less liable to fluctuations. But there is no reason given for that; nor is there any reason to believe that the fluctuations are in many cases due to the bounties.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: The fluctuations are largely due to bounties; but I admit there are other causes. We will never be able to get rid of fluctuaions entirely.

MR. BRYCE: That is a question on which I have no special knowledge. It is a statement which requires proof. I want to be shown that the fluctuations in prices are coincident with bounties. Just look at the enormous fluctuations that occur in cotton and grain, and who will venture to say that there will be no further fluctuations in the sugar trade. It is not a statement that can be accepted on the mere *ipse dixit* of any Department. The cartels will very likely be interested in causing fluctuations, and they will have the power to cause them. The President of the Board of Trade said that the Convention struck a blow at the system of cartels, which was applicable to every protected country. That in one sense is a most valuable admission that the system of combinations and trusts and rings is more easily carried out where there are protective duties than where there are not. That has been our contention throughout, and one of the strongest objections to a change in the fiscal policy of this country was, that so far from delivering us from combinations it would expose us to them. Therefore, the admission of the right hon. Gentleman is of the greatest value. But let us remember that we do not get rid of protection. Are we, whenever we find a bounty in existence, to make a convention to put a stop to it. Take the case of our own colonies. Ontario is, I believe, at this moment giving a bounty on the production of beet sugar in order to meet competition. The Dominion Government is, I believe, giving a bounty on iron, lead, and steel. Are we to remonstrate with Canada? Are we to consider that Canada is pursuing a policy hostile to us because she gives a bounty? Let us mind our own business, and if some other country chooses to injure itself by giving bounties let it mind its own business. We hear a good deal about "dumping," and it is evidently to be a large part of the controversy. "Dumping" has become a term to denote the selling of goods below the cost of production. I suppose the term is intended to stigmatise the process as being something miserable and revolting. The idea suggests refuse, and that the articles "dumped" are fit for nothing except to be cast out and got rid of. How does that apply in cases in which the things "dumped" are iron, steel, and sugar, not useless articles, and in some cases parcels of cotton goods. Therefore, all that "dumping" means is that somebody is kind enough to give us goods below the cost of production. Is there anything to resent in that? Is it any injury to the trade of this country? Has it ever been so? Never. I say with some confidence it has never been an injury to the trade of this country except on small occasions and for brief periods. I do not deny that there are moments when the markets are disturbed by putting parcels of goods below cost price on them; but what I do deny is, that there has ever been a case where permanent injury has been inflicted.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: It has inflicted injury on the West Indies, and has almost destroyed their trade.

MR. BRYCE: I will be prepared to deal with that case presently. If goods are "dumped" here, what is the proper course to pursue? The proper course is to buy them. If people "dump" great quantities of pig-iron and steel upon us, it is our business to take that iron and steel, and to work it up into manufactured articles, making more profit than if the raw materials were produced in this country. That is the proper way to deal with "dumping." We may be perfectly certain that no body of foreign manufacturers, no foreign combination, in their own interest ever pursue this process for very long. Now I come to the case of the West Indies, which is the whole foundation for this Convention. There is no other argument fit to be considered for a moment. The West Indies are amongst our oldest colonies, and they are a group of colonies of which we are proud. I do not wish to approach their case in an unsympathetic spirit, but I may remark that the President of the Board of Trade omitted altogether to point out what is the substantial benefit to be expected by the West Indies from the Convention. It has been remarked that the sugar from the West Indies is only a small part of the total production, and only an exceedingly small part of our imports. The United Kingdom takes 1,600,000 tons annually, but only 45,000 or 50,000 tons from the West Indies, while the total annual production of those colonies is 240,000 tons, the great bulk of which goes to the United States. Therefore, our trade in the West Indies is a very small one, and it is a mere matter of opinion as to whether that trade will be very greatly enlarged. At any rate it is not certain, and it is in the realm of hope and not of fact. If the West Indies are to be benefited it can only be by the raising of the price of sugar, and very serious reasons have been given to show that it is not certain that the price will be raised. And if the price is not raised, how are the West Indies going to be benefited? I found when I visited the West Indies that the general impression, both in Cuba and Jamaica, was that the West Indies sugar trade was chiefly suffering from bounties, and that it would revive if the bounties were put an end to. We know that discontented people are likely to attribute their misfortunes to any cause except the right one, and I am not sure that the West Indies have made a true diagnosis of the disease from which they are suffering. The President of the Board of Trade did not commit himself upon the question as to whether the price would be raised or not. Very serious reasons have been given to show that it is not certain that the price will be raised.

MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL (Oldham): Not raised enough.

MR. BRYCE: That is practically the same thing. The President of the Board of Trade says that we cannot argue both that the price will be raised and that it will not. If the Government raised the price they may possibly benefit the West Indies, but they will injure the trade and the consumers; if they do not raise the price they will not benefit the West Indies. How can the Government meet that dilemma?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: It depends on whether we are speaking of the average price. If the average price remains approximately the same, without great fluctuations, the West Indies may be enormously benefited without any injury whatever to the consumers.

MR. BRYCE: I admit that that is an escape from the dilemma which my right hon. friend has prepared for himself. There is nothing to show that the price will not fluctuate, and there may possibly be just as great fluctuations after we have got the Convention; and, if so, the West Indies may suffer in the future just as in the past. Then it must be remembered that the cartels may reduce the price, and also that the loss of the United States market may inflict a far greater injury to the sugar trade of the West Indies than could possibly be made up by any rise of price the Convention might make. The United States is very likely, in view of its arrangements with Cuba, to raise the duties so high against the West Indies that they will be cut out of this, which has been their great market. That would be a far greater blow than any benefit which may be conferred under this Convention. There is, too, the competition of Cuba, whose last harvest of sugar was nearly three times as much as that of the British West Indies; under the fostering development of the United States, Cuba will in the future be a far more dangerous competitor. Cuba is an island bigger than all the West Indies put together, and it is admirably suited to sugar cultivation. It has now got a population far below what it is capable of keeping. It has only a population of about 1,500,000 and it is capable of supporting 10,000,000. In the last harvest it produced 800,000 tons of sugar. Cuba is to be opened up by the construction of railways. United States capital is flowing into it, and it is likely to undergo a very remarkable development, which will make it a far more dangerous competitor with the West Indies than it has ever been before. I give these warnings lest it should be thought that by passing the Convention we are ensuring the well-being of the British West Indies. The depression in those islands is due to far deeper causes than sugar bounties, such as the poor quality of the labour, the lack of enterprise, and the want of modern machinery and appliances. In Europe it is chiefly the application of science, skill, and enterprise which had developed the beetroot sugar trade, just as in Germany electrical machinery and dyeing industries have been developed. If Jamaica develops her trade in bananas, oranges, cocoa, and tobacco, there is no reason why she should not do better than with sugar, and the same thing applies to a number of the other islands. Compared with the present policy, an annual grant to the West Indies would render them a greater service, but unfortunately that is the very thing which this Convention forbids, and it thus closes to us the one door through which we might have helped the West Indies. A subsidy to the West Indies would have been better for those colonies, and it would have been a great deal cheaper for us in the end. As to the possible results of the Convention, one is the imposition of a total prohibition on the entrance of sugar from any country which does not comply with its provisions That prohibition has been adopted, I suppose, instead of countervailing duties, in order to escape from the operation of the most-favoured-nation clause.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: The reason is that we have considered that countervailing duties should not be applied without the direct sanction of Parliament.

MR. BRYCE: The imposition of a countervailing duty is contrary to the most-favoured nation clause, and surely it is an *à fortiori* case to refuse to admit goods on any terms whatever. It is like putting on a duty so high that it is absolutely prohibitive. I take it that it is the general opinion of lawyers that this is a transgression of the most-favoured-nation clause.

I will not dwell on the other inconveniences, upon the difficulty that will be imposed on our shipping trade of not being able to get return cargoes, on the trouble that will be caused by the certificate of origin and other obvious difficulties which will arise, but there is one other matter upon which I wish to say a word. Just at the moment when we are claiming that we and our colonies are to be treated as one economical and political whole we are going out of our way to emphasise the difference between ourselves and the colonies. There is a grotesque inconsistency in our action with regard to this Convention. We have given the self-governing colonies the opportunity of joining in the Convention and they have refused to join, and we have bound ourselves not to give any preference to our colonies, and have made ourselves parties to a scheme under which our self-governing colonies, if they give bounties, may be penalised. It is true the Government have tried to reserve power not to penalise sugar when it comes from a colony giving a bounty, but, under the Convention, sugar coming from a colony giving a bounty is to be penalised, and, being parties to the Convention, we shall be parties to the penalising of our own colonies. This Convention is clearly and admittedly bad for Great Britain. ["Oh, oh!"] It is intended to raise the price of sugar, and the only case made for it is that it may confer some benefit on the West Indies. I greatly doubt whether it will really do so, but I am quite sure that it is not the best way in which we can benefit the West Indies, because it will only prolong and partially alleviate their condition, which needs different and more courageous remedies. I cannot help doubting whether, when we entered into these negotiations, the Government meant to go so far as they have done, and whether they were not in some hope that they would obtain the abolition of bounties without entering into a convention at all. The question asked as to Austro-Hungarian sugar ought to be answered. Is it going to be penalised on 1st September ?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I do not think the question will arise. By that time in all probability the Austro-Hungarian law will be brought into conformity with the Convention.

MR. BRYCE: We ought to know what will happen if it is not.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: There will be a new conference.

MR. BRYCE: There will not be time to enter a new conference. The Government will have to go and ask the leave of the Commission not to penalise Austro-Hungarian sugar. That is not a satisfactory prospect. We are only at the threshold of the difficulties that will arise. This is an ill-advised, short-sighted measure, framed with an eye bent on certain small interests, and blind to much greater interests and to the endless inconveniences which arise from the interference by an external body with the trade of the country. In the attempt to rectify the interference of bounties with the course of trade the Government are going to make a greater interference with our own trade. In ninety-nine cases out of a hundred legislative interference with trade has done more harm than good. I fear we are going to have another illustration of that historical experience, and if we must have it, I only wish that it had been going on for some years, so that the country might have had an object lesson, which would be valuable now that we are asked to go back to an old policy which assumes that trade can be better managed by Parliament than by itself. The Convention is a trumpery and needless device for effecting, at the maximum inconvenience to the country, a relief to the West Indian sugar trade, which it is doubtful whether we can effect after all.

*MR. BONAR LAW: I desire in the first place to answer the question put by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Aberdeen as to whether we are going to enforce the penalty against Austria-Hungary. He knows, or should know, if he has studied the history of the Convention, that in the case of any country which is a party to the Convention, we should not be bound to enforce any penalty until the Commission has declared that we are bound to do so.

MR. BRYCE: This is exactly what I suggested myself.

*MR. BONAR LAW: I beg the right hon. Gentleman's pardon. He asks if we are going to enforce it on 1st September. He knows that it does not meet until 1st October. Another point on which the right hon. Gentleman invited an answer was in regard to the statement of my right hon. friend the President of the Board of Trade that cartels had been scotched, if not killed, by the Convention. The right hon. Gentleman told the House that they were going to be as strong as they had ever been.

MR. BRYCE: I say it has not been shown to us that they are not going to be as strong as ever.

*MR. BONAR LAW: Does the right hon. Gentleman suppose for a moment that the cartel where the protective duty is 20s. will not be made infinitely stronger than where the protective duty is only 4s. 6d., and yet by the Convention that is the utmost limit of the surtax which can be put on? If the right hon. Gentleman will think about it, he will see that there is nothing like 4s. 6d. which can be given. The profit must be made out of the sugar sold to the home market. That surely is sufficient proof that the cartels will not be as strong, but if he wants additional proof he will find it in this reason—that the private sugar industry in Austria has acknowledged that with a limitation of the surtax it was impossible to work a cartel that would do them the least good. There is only one other point in the last part of the speech to which I wish to refer. The right hon. Gentleman told us that prohibition was far worse than countervailing duties. I am not going to argue that point with him, but I will read the opinion expressed in this House in November last by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Monmouth. He said—

> "Of course, anybody would have preferred countervailing duties to prohibition."

This has been a very interesting debate, and those who have spoken against the Convention have used some very strong language. It has been described as foolish, clumsy, blundering, and by some other adjectives which I have forgotten, but the hon. Member for West Islington beat the record when he described it as a nefarious proposal. I do not think that anyone in favour of the Convention objects to the use of language of that kind, for there is no feeling more universal or better justified than that. On such questions as this the strength of the language is always in inverse proportion to the strength of the argument, and the debate to which we have listened is not one of the exceptions that prove the rule. I was reading the debate in the Austrian Parliament on this Convention, and I came upon a passage which I thought might be quoted as a foil in regard to the strong language used in this House in regard to it. The speaker said—

> "England has conducted this business extremely cleverly and diplomatically."

I would like hon. Gentlemen who think the Convention altogether to the advantage of Germany, and particularly the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Aberdeen, to read the debates in the German Parliament on the question. If the right hon. Gentleman does so he will find that the German Parliament does not like it If he does so he will find they have accepted it simply because they had no choice and could not do anything else. Of course that does not prove anything to hon. Gentlemen opposite. These Germans are only poor ignorant foreigners; they know nothing about economics; they only know how to undersell us in our own markets. I do not object to the strong language, but I must say that it is surprising to find it applied to a Bill the principle of which has been approved over and over again by both political Parties in this country. That, however, is a consideration which does not weigh equally heavily with every one. The hon. Member for West Islington does not feel himself slavishly bound by the traditions of the Party to which he belongs. On the introduction of the Bill he made a speech in which he spoke very freely of Mr. Gladstone himself.

*MR. LOUGH: Hear, hear.

*MR. BONAR LAW: That is a view for which there is a great deal to be said—the view embodied in a familiar proverb. It would not be polite to the hon. Gentleman to quote it literally, but I may venture, without disrespect for the memory of Mr. Gladstone, to paraphrase it by saying, "A living Member for Islington is better than a dead Member for Mid-Lothian." Only four years ago the leader of the Opposition stated in reply to the Secretary of State for India that he was just as much opposed to bounties as my noble friend. He said bounties were bad, for they disturbed trade and hindered the development of the country. But we do not need to go back so far as four years ago. Only last year the right hon

Gentleman the Member for South Aberdeen tacitly approved of the policy contained in this Convention. The right hon. Gentleman the Colonial Secretary brought before the House a proposal for a subvention in aid of the West Indies. He introduced it and defended it solely as part of the Sugar Convention, and if hon. and right hon. Gentlemen thought then as they think now, that this is such an abominable measure, surely that was their opportunity for making their protest.

*MR. LOUGH: So we did.

*MR. BONAR LAW: They could have protested by speech or by their votes, for there was a division, but they protested in neither way. Not only did they give tacit approval, but the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Aberdeen actually and openly approved the Convention which he has just condemned.

MR. BRYCE: I did nothing of the kind. What I said was that I was unwilling to oppose the grant in the hope that it might help the West Indies to tide over immediate difficulties. But I gave nothing whatever of the nature of an approval of the Convention itself. That would have been quite inconsistent with the views that have always been held on this Bench.

*MR. BONAR LAW: I am sorry if I have misrepresented the right hon. Gentleman. These are his words—

> "But as the Vote was represented as being merely a temporary and exceptional remedy for tiding over the particular crisis which would exist until the arrangements made under the Sugar Bounties Convention came into operation he would . . . . abstain from meeting it with that opposition which it might otherwise have been his duty to give."

That meant that the right hon. Gentleman would not disapprove of the grant, as it was part of the Sugar Bounties Convention.

MR. BRYCE: Nothing of the sort. It was the last thing I should have thought of doing.

*MR. BONAR LAW: He especially told us in the debate that he disapproved of the grant, but would not oppose it as it was part of the Sugar Convention.

MR. BRYCE: I said nothing of the sort.

*MR. BONAR LAW: I beg the right hon. Gentleman's pardon. He did not speak or vote against it. If he did not approve of the Sugar Convention then why did he not speak against the grant?

MR. BRYCE: The Sugar Convention was not before us. What I said was that I doubted very much the expediency of the grant, but it was represented that there was a case of distress in the West Indies, which would otherwise make it necessary to send charitable relief. That is why I would not vote against this particular proposal.

*MR. BONAR LAW: I will not argue that further. I would recommend the right hon. Gentleman to read his speech again, and if he does so I shall be greatly surprised if he does not admit that my interpretation is perfectly correct. But, after all, the important thing is not whether the right hon. Gentleman took one view last year and takes another view now. The important thing is whether the view he took last year or the one he takes now is the right one. Everyone who has spoken against the Bill has taken it for granted that the sole reason for introducing it is to benefit the West Indies, and not only so, but that it is impossible to benefit the West Indies except at the expense of the United Kingdom. I am not going to describe again to the House what is already known in regard to the position of the West Indies. A flourishing part of the British Empire has been brought to ruin, or the verge of ruin, by these bounties and by nothing else. I agree entirely with the statement made by the Secretary for India four years ago that, if one of the great industries of this country were ever destroyed in the same way as the sugar industry had been in the West Indies, he believed this country would not stand it. I believe that if the issue could be put before the country by itself, whether or no one of the great staple industries should be destroyed by unfair competition, there is not one man in a hundred who would not say such a thing should not be. I am sorry to find that the right hon. Gentleman takes a different view.

Mr. BRYCE: I never said anything in the least resembling that.

*Mr. BONAR LAW: What I was referring to was the statement that the more iron and steel that was dumped down upon us the better.

Mr. BRYCE: I never said that.

*Mr. BONAR LAW: The House heard the speech of the right hon. Gentleman, and I must leave the House to judge on that point. I will only quote a few words to show that Mr. Gladstone had no sympathy with such a view. He said—

"If we are bound to observe the principles of equity towards foreign countries we are bound to observe the principles of equity towards our own subjects."

And again—

"I cannot regard with favour any cheapness which has the effect of crippling and distressing the capitalists and workmen engaged in any lawful British industry."

I do not argue with those who hold that view, but I do appeal to those who would not allow an industry in the United Kingdom to be destroyed by such means, whether this House is not equally bound to defend the staple industry of one of our Crown Colonies. I quite admit it might happen that to benefit the West Indies would imply a disadvantage to this country out of all proportion to the gain to the West Indies. But what reason have we to suppose that the Convention is going to injure the United Kingdom? To say, as is said on the other side, that bounties have done good, and nothing but good, is not only absurd but can be proved to be absurd. When I first entered a commercial office in Glasgow one of the most flourishing industries was the supply of machinery for the West Indies. That has been destroyed, and the bounties have destroyed it. Was that no disadvantage to the people of this country? Twenty years ago the cane sugar imported into this country was about 14,000,000 cwts.; that has been reduced now to 2 500,000 cwts. That represents only a small part of the considerations involved in the figures. With the natural growth in consumption, what would it mean to this country if the whole import came from the cane-growing countries? What would it mean to the shipping industry? If this sugar came from a distant cane-growing country our ships would have been employed in bringing the sugar to this country and in taking out machinery and supplies produced in this country, and our workshops would have been busy in creating the supplies of all kinds required by these plantations. There is another disadvantage from which this country has suffered in consequence of the sugar bounties. I refer to the sugar-refining industry, which was once one of the most flourishing industries in this country. The number of people employed in the sugar-refining industry in this country has been reduced by more than 50 per cent. in spite of the immense increase in the quantity of sugar consumed. We are told that this disadvantage is more than compensated for by the growth of the confectionery and other allied trades. Where is the compensation? Why should we not have both? When the sugar refiners find that the capital they have invested in the sugar industry has largely been lost, and when the men who have made their living out of the industry have had to seek, often in vain, for other employment, what comfort is it for them to know that the same cause that has ruined them has made jam-making possible in Dundee? Why should we not have both? The confectioners take it for granted that this Convention is going to destroy their industry. What grounds have they for that assumption? With the Convention they will still have sugar cheaper than it can be got in any other country. For every other country is going to keep up its protective system, and the confectioners in this country will be able to compete, not only on equal terms but on most favourable terms, and surely if any trade cannot compete under such conditions that is not a trade which the apostles of free trade would desire specially to protest. I do not know whether the confectioners are now unanimously of opinion that the Convention is going to do them a great deal of harm. They did not always hold that opinion. A leading firm expressed the opinion that the abolition of bounties would not injure the confectionery trade.

AN HON. MEMBER: When was that?

*MR. BONAR LAW: In 1889.

AN HON. MEMBER: Everything has changed since then.

*MR. BONAR LAW: I am obliged for the interruption of the hon. Gentleman. "Everything has changed since then!" Do principles alter with dates?

*MR. LOUGH: Ask the Colonial Secretary.

*MR. BONAR LAW: I am asking the hon. Member. There has been no change whatever in the position. Before 1889 the price of sugar had already fallen below 10s., a reasonable enough price. It is simply a difference of opinion among men in the same trade interests, and is it not fair to ask whether the confectioners of 1889 were not wiser and saw farther than their successors to-day.

Now these are the disadvantages. What is the advantage? There is one only, that of cheap sugar, and that is said to be an advantage so great that it is supposed to out-weigh all the disadvantages. Is the average price of sugar cheaper on account of the bounties than it would have been without them? The answer is supplied by the hon. Member for West Islington, who, speaking exactly a year ago, said there was nothing remarkable in the fall of sugar, that it had fallen like other commodities. The hon Member cited the case of tea, which, he said, had fallen quite as much as sugar. What was the cause of the fall in tea? It was not bounties; it was the improvement in the method of cultivation, the adoption of machinery instead of hand labour, and, above all, in the immense increase in the area of cultivation. Why should not the same thing apply to sugar? There is an immense area suitable for sugar growing, and who is prepared to say that, if sugar had been left to the natural laws of supply and demand, the average price of sugar would not have been just as low without bounties as it has been in consequence of bounties? The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Aberdeen has asked, "How will this benefit the West Indies?" I do not think the answer is very difficult to find. It is found in a speech of the right hon. Gentleman himself, when he stated that the West Indies could be made one of the best sugar estates in the world, and that Cuba, owing to American capital, had been able to make sugar at a price with which the West Indies could not compete.

MR. BRYCE: I made that statement from my own knowledge.

*MR. BONAR LAW: What is it that has made it possible for Cuba to produce sugar at a reasonable price? It is its connection with the United States; it is the knowledge that from the time Cuba was connected with the United States its sugar would have a fair chance in the markets of the world.

MR. BRYCE: The phenomena I described happened before Cuba received the privileges of connection with the United States. Cuba did not get these privileges until long after the end of the Spanish-American war.

*MR. BONAR LAW: My point is the pretty obvious one that long-headed men in the United States knew that after the war Cuba would receive these privileges, and there was an inducement for them to put capital into the industry, which has resulted in Cuba being able to produce sugar at a reasonable price. And, if the West Indies got similar advantages, if they had a fair chance in the markets of the world, is it not reasonable to suppose that the same capital and the same energy will be available there. I have an authority who is well entitled to speak from his special knowledge on this subject, the right hon. baronet the Member for Berwick. And this is what he says about the difference the abolition of bounties will make.

> "In these days of scientific invention, machinery will always be improved, and constantly have to be renewed; but in any business, for the renewal and improvement of machinery you must have credit."

And he went on to apply the argument that the bounties had interfered with credit and prevented the owners of sugar estates raising the capital to enable them to get new and improved machinery. The right hon. Gentleman also said that what was wanted was scientific methods and better machinery. You cannot get scientific methods and improved machinery in any trade unless there is a reasonable prospect of profit. That seems to me to be a complete answer so far as the West Indies are concerned. They say that they can compete with the rest of the world. Give them a chance and a fair field and you will find that they are quite able to hold their own against any sugar producing countries, cane or beet, which are to be found throughout the whole of the world.

There is only one other point I would like to bring before the House. Nearly everyone who has spoken on this subject against the Government has taken it for granted that this question, and all similar questions, can be dealt with by some simple plan that acts automatically. Let us apply that argument to this case. The right hon. Gentleman opposite says that the Convention is contrary to free trade. I wish that my right hon. friend, the Member for West Bristol had been present, for he knows as much about free trade as any hon. Member, and he thinks that the Convention is entirely within the scope of free trade principles. The world is now too complicated for us to get any simple plan which can be applied to every trade ; to discover such, I believe, is no more possible than it was in earlier days to discover the Philosopher's Stone. You cannot do it. The trade conditions of the world have been changing enormously during the last twelve years. They have changed more, I believe, than at any previous period in our history in the same space of time. How are these changing conditions to be met? If the guidance of the country were in the hands of the right hon. Gentleman opposite, he would fly to the rock of his free trade principles, and, when the waves of foreign competition were sweeping over him, he would be seen, in the interval of a receding wave, clinging shivering to his rock and still exclaiming—"My principles are all right, the rock is still here, it is the facts that are all wrong." Yes Sir! It is the facts which are wrong, but since it is not possible for us to alter the facts to suit our theories, is it not time for us to begin to think of altering our theories to make them suit the facts?

Mr. Bonar Law.

*MR. FLETCHER MOULTON (Cornwall, Launceston): The speech of the hon. Gentleman puts the case of the Government on the most extraordinary basis. His justification of this Convention with all the consequences involved in putting England at the mercy of a foreign tribunal, is that it will enable the West Indies to get enough capital for the proper working of their sugar factories. The case that the Sugar Convention will raise the price of sugar and enable the West Indies to compete with the rest of the world is given up, and he would have us believe that this unprecedented step is solely to make it easy to get a million or two invested in new sugar machinery!

At the end of his speech the Under Secretary to the Board of Trade appealed to us to remember that the conditions of trade had altered more in the last few years than in the previous fifty years. The House has heard the piteous plaint the hon. Gentleman made that the sugar refineries had been thrown out of work, and his statement that any cheapness which was fatal to such a trade was a cheapness which should be viewed with suspicion. It is perfectly true that many sugar producers in the West Indies are in difficulties, conditions of trade have changed and in nothing more than in sugar. But the change has not been wrought by bounties, but by the introduction of a new source of sugar, beet, capable of being grown in temperate climates, in the midst of the most civilised countries amongst peoples who are able to apply, on the spot, scientific machinery and processes. Thus, the centre, of gravity of sugar production is changed; the production of beet sugar has been going up in civilised countries, while the production of cane sugar in the tropics has been going down. It is idle to look to bounties as the cause of this change, and it would be just as ridiculous to attempt to keep alive the cane industry as it now exists in the West Indies in the presence of the beet industry in France and Germany, as to attempt to stop the introduction of machine-looms because you do not want to throw out of work the hand-loom weavers. Let us look plainly at the facts of the case. As soon as the beet industry became developed on the Continent, they looked for what was the great sugar consuming market. That market was England; and so important was it that there arose not only individual, but national, competition for it. France, Germany, and Austria competed, not against us, but against one another, for us as a most valuable customer, and they offered us the best terms they could. The competition, national and individual, to which is due the present price of sugar is simply a testimony of the enormous importance of our market. The consequence was that they offered these bounties, the sole effect of which has been to render the price of sugar in England lower, and as we are not a sugar producing country, it has been an unmixed good to us to get our sugar thus cheap. Now, supposing that there had been only a bounty on raw sugar, there would not have been one single person in the United Kingdom otherwise than benefited by these bounties. The complaint of the refiner is not against bounties generally, but against the existence of one set of bounties in favour of raw sugar, and another in favour of refined sugar, the latter being higher than the former. This has a tendency to increase the proportion of sugar imported in the refined state, but this is not the main cause of the disappearance of so many old refineries in England. In 1864 there were something like sixty refiners. By 1882 they had dwindled to thirty, and now they are only about fifteen, and they do far more business than the sixty did in 1864. I know what sugar refineries are and have been both in England and abroad. The successful refineries of to-day bear no resemblance to their forerunners. The old English refinery was a fire trap of the worst description—a risk which no office would take, they were so ill-arranged and so behind all other manufactories in the nature of their plant. I have been over the great sugar factories in France, and I know that Germany is not behind France, and there I have found magnificent machinery arranged in a way that facilitated, and reduced to the smallest amount, the cost of production. Do you suppose that anybody is going to keep alive antiquated refineries in competition with these up-to-date sugar manufactories? I think the industrial life of this country ought not to be carried on in museums but in properly equipped establishments. The real cause of the decline in the number of sugar refineries is the antiquated plant and machinery used. What right have I to say that is the real cause? Well, take the two firms at the head of the trade now—Tate and Lyle. It is true that Tate's bought a patent in 1870 for a special process of refining sugar, but it expired in 1884, and of so little importance was it that, I believe, not a single refiner adopted the process when it thus became open to the public. It was said Tate had a patent for cubes, but it also expired in 1888 or 1890, yet Tate's remained still at the head, defying competition as before. Another firm had the right to use the patent for cubes, yet it went under while Tate's flourished. It was not the patent that kept Tate's up. It was business ability. Lyle's crystals were made out of raw beet sugar which came into the country cheap by reason of these bounties, and he competed on equal terms and with the greatest success with the German refiners. Where our refiners have been men of enterprise and energy these bounties have not crushed them. They have built up magnificent businesses. It is a perfect delusion that by our sugar refineries we deal with only an insignificant part of the sugar that comes into this country. One-third of it is refined in this country, and considering that sugar is produced in countries like France, Germany, and Austria, where there is every facility for manufacture, it is no wonder that two-thirds of it is sent out in a finished shape. Indeed, I am rather surprised that as much as one-third is refined in this country, because there is very little more difficulty in shipping refined than unrefined sugar. The truth is that our refineries have held their own where they have been modernised; and they still refine a large portion of the sugar which comes to England. That is how the refiners' case stands. Is it to be said that we are to make sugar dear and interfere with free trade into England just because our refiners cling to their old methods, and have not enterprise enough to follow their leaders in new methods. It would be a most calamitous policy for England if she tried to keep alive an industry which would not learn the lessons of the day.

I have said that if it were not for the refiners, there would not be a word said by anyone in England against these bounties. Everyone else in England unquestionably benefits by them. And this plea for the refiners is a mere pretence to cover the real motive for the action of the Government. The main reason why the Convention came into existence was, on the authority of Lord Lansdowne, the West Indian Islands. The hon. Gentleman who has just spoken said there was no justification for that statement. I do not know whether the despatch of last year is any justification in his eyes. It is a despatch from the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. Of course, we know that there is now no connection between the views of one Minister and the views of another. Moreover, the dispatch was written a year ago; and that is rather a long period for a Party that thinks that the best use to make of the word "Consistent" is for a telegraphic address. But for all this the public are entitled to rely on the fact that Lord Lansdowne stated that the reason for this Convention was the state of the West Indies. Now I want to deal with that. The figures have been quoted again and again, and they demonstrate the utter futility of such an excuse. The West Indies cannot produce enough sugar for England, and even if they could they would not. I feel satisfied that if the Government were not committed to this Convention, and if the individual members of the Cabinet had taken the opportunity of looking for themselves into this question, we should never have had the Convention forced upon us because of the so-called case of the West Indies. First of all, these islands only send us one-fortieth of what we consume, and only one-third of the sugar coming from cane-producing countries. So backward are the West Indies, that Java and places further off are able to beat the West Indies, not only in our markets, but in the markets of the United States. Nor is it true that the sugar they send is unable to compete with European sugar. They send a fine refined sugar, an artificially-browned sugar, which sells extremely well in the market. They might sell as much more as they liked, as, for old associations sake, people would buy it in preference to white crystals, which are equally good. But the West Indies are far too lazy to make that refined sugar throughout. What they largely make is a very coarse sugar, and the principal market for that is the United States and not our English refineries. Our English refineries do not refine any of that sugar; and if it comes over here it is only to be turned into invert sugar for the purposes of brewing. Therefore, the West Indies are not producing what they could produce, and which would sell here at a very good price. The next point is that even if they would, they could not. Suppose we were to pass a self-denying ordinance refusing to use beet sugar, the consequence would be that the other cane-producing countries would beat the West Indies in sugar which is treated in this debate as being their own particular product, and the result would be that we should obtain our sugar from Java or other foreign countries. Apparently that would delight very much the Under Secretary to the Board of Trade, who seems to admire everything that makes sugar expensive, and he seems to imagine that all the machinery for producing sugar would be obtained from England. If the hon. Gentleman looks into the question of sugar manufacture, he will find that England is not so far ahead in the question of making sugar machinery as it used to be. If we stick to old methods that is the consequence. Therefore we cannot keep any important part of our market in the hands of the West Indies by artificially raising the price. Yet this is what the Government are proposing to do. It is too silly to suggest that this Convention was entered into for the sake of enabling West Indian planters to get a loan of £1,000,000 or £2,000,000 of capital to put up works. Everyone knows that in some parts of the West Indies there are excellent works which are doing very well, and for which the proprietors have been able to find the requisite capital. If this were the real reason it would be infinitely better for us if we were to give them £2,000,000 for the purpose of improving their works. No such subterfuges invented at the last moment will avail the Government. We know that one of the objects of the Convention is to raise the price of sugar—Sir Henry Norman said by ½d. in the pound, the Colonial Secretary said by £5 a ton.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I beg the hon. Gentleman's pardon. I never said it would raise the price £5 per ton. All I said was that bounties at a particular time, in a particular country, amounted to £5 per ton.

***MR. FLETCHER MOULTON**: The right hon. Gentleman, of course, does not remember all he has said. The right hon. Gentleman's statement was—

> "The advantage given by the bounties to other sugar as opposed to West Indian sugar is probably not less than £5 a ton."

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: Hear, hear! I never said that the bounties raised the price by £5 a ton.

***MR. FLETCHER MOULTON**: According to the right hon. Gentleman the advantage given is £5 a ton, and the consequence is that if you abolish these bounties you increase the price of bounty-fed sugar by £5 a ton. There is no reason to think that it is now being sold at any exaggerated profit, and the consequence is that its price will be raised by £5 a ton, and that the West Indies will join in the increase. Bounty-fed sugar is the main sugar in the market, and fixes the price, West Indian sugar being only a small supply which has to compete with European sugar which is being subjected to a change of treatment calculated to raise the price £5 a ton. If that does not mean that West Indian sugar will have the advantage of the price of sugar being raised £5 a ton in England I do not know what it does mean. It very nearly corresponds with the estimate of Sir Henry Norman of an increase of ½d. per pound. Just see what we are going to do. The total produce of the West Indies at the present moment is 240,000 tons. Let us assume that they will give up sending their sugar to the United States, although I think the United States is at least as good a customer as we are. Even in that case, they would only send to us one-sixth of the quantity of sugar used in this country; and the consequence would be that what the West Indies would gain would be the rise of price on one-sixth of the sugar consumed in this country, the rise on the remaining five-sixths going into the national exchequers of France, Germany, and Austria-Hungary. The fact is that these nations were in a very grave difficulty when the Government came to their aid. I have never said that bounties are good. They are as unwise as every other form of protection, but they are the one form of protection which does good to foreign countries, however bad it may be at home. Once bounties are started it is hard to drop them; just as it is hard to drop any other form of protection. As long as these bounties were kept up there was more or less competition between the different countries, and that kept down the price of sugar. Now what have we done? We have relieved these national exchequers from paying sums which, in the case of France, amounted to something like £4,000,000. These bounties were paid by the Governments of the several nations to secure for their nations as large a share of the English market as possible. They did this under pressure from the agricultural as well as the manufacturing interest, and so long as they did so it was not practicable for the rings of sugar manufacturers and refiners in the different countries to limit and apportion production so as to get for themselves the maximum profit. But now all this is changed. Now the cartels can settle the whole matter among themselves and arrange what amount each country has to produce, and that is settled solely from the point of view of keeping up the price of sugar in England. The consequence is that we have relieved the Governments of these countries of thes huge payments—and they must have heaved a deep sigh of relief when they got this Convention safely signed—and have left ourselves defenceless as regards the cartels. We have set them free now, before any development has taken place in any other sugar-producing country, and we are left as their victims. Every terror with which we were threatened as a possible censequence of the system of bounties has been made a present reality by the action of the Government. It is like a man who commits suicide because he is afraid he may be hurt in a duel. We have given these countries the power, if they like, to run up the price of sugar in this country, and what have we done it for? I have pointed out that the West Indies can only get, at the most part, the rise, whatever it may be, on one-sixth of the sugar we consume, whereas, five-sixths will go to relieve the National Exchequers of other countries, and we set free £7,000,000 or £8,000,000 to be employed perhaps as bounties for other trades and we shall only have the satisfaction of knowing that by means of this Convention we have put a burden on the shoulders of the British consumer equal to about 5s. per cwt. Now I wish to show what a brilliant piece of finance this is. I wish to contrast West Bristol and West Birmingham. The late Chancellor of the Exchequer placed a tax on sugar, but it was put on in accordance with the traditions of English finance, and (allowing for the necessary friction and confusion of trade which accompanies every tax) every single penny of that sugar tax, to the amount of about £6,250,000, went into the National Exchequer. Now the Colonial Secretary proposes to put on us an approximately equal burden. The price of sugar will be augmented by just as much as in the other case. But this was not done according to the traditions of English finance, and the consequence is that a burden equal to the former sugar tax, or rather greater, has been put on the shoulders of the English consumer, not one penny of which will go to the relief of national burdens. Every penny that does not go into the Exchequers of Germany, France, and Austria-Hungary, will go into the pockets of the planters of the West Indies, and we shall have contrived, at a time when expenditure is increasing so rapidly, and the necessary taxes are so heavy, to put a second sugar tax on without reaping the benefit of a single penny from it. The only consolation I have is that when the fight comes—as apparently it is to come, when the dominant power in the Ministry says "go"—when it is a question of whether or not the new finance is better than the honest old English finance, we have only to send the people to the grocers' shop, and they will be able to see for themselves whether West Birmingham is an improvement on West Bristol.

Motion made, and Question, "That the debate be now adjourned."—(*Mr. Griffith Boscawen*)—put and agreed to.

Debate to be resumed to-morrow.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to amend the Locomotives on Highways Act, 1896." [Motor-Cars Bill (Lords).]

PUBLIC BUILDINGS EXPENSES (CONSOLIDATED FUND).

Order read, for resuming Adjourned Debate on Question [27th July], "That this House will, this day resolve itself into a Committee to consider of making further provision for defraying the expenses of the purchase of land and buildings, and the construction of buildings and works in connection with certain public Departments, and of authorising the payment, out of the Consolidated Fund, and out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of such sums as may be necessary for those purposes."—(*Mr. Elliot.*)

Question again proposed.

Debate resumed.

Question put, and agreed to.

Resolved: That this House will, this day, resolve itself into a Committee to consider of making further provision for defraying the expenses of the purchase of land and buildings, and the construction of buildings and works in connection with certain public Departments, and of authorising the payment, out of the Consolidated Fund, and out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of such sums as may be necessary for those purposes.

PATRIOTIC FUND BILL.

Read a second time, and committed for this day.

Whereupon, in pursuance of the Order of the House of the 28th day of July, Mr. Speaker adjourned the House without Question put.

Adjourned at twenty-five minutes after Twelve o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Wednesday, 29th July, 1903.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Harrow Road and Paddington Tramways Bill; London United Tramways Bill. Lords' Amendments considered, and agreed to.

Bournemouth Gas and Water Bill [Lords]; Scottish Ontario and Manitoba Land Company Bill [Lords]. As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

Scottish Central Electric Power Bill [Lords]. Read a second time, and committed.

Perth Corporation (Tramways) Order Confirmation Bill [Lords]; Aberdeen Corporation Tramways Order Confirmation Bill [Lords]. Read the third time, and passed, without Amendment.

Glasgow Corporation (Police) Order Confirmation Bill [Lords]; Irvine and District Water Board Confirmation Bill [Lords]. Considered; to be read the third time upon Friday.

Wick and Pulteney Harbours Order Confirmation Bill. Considered; to be read the third time upon Friday.

Tramways Orders Confirmation (No. 1) Bill [Lords]; Tramways Orders Confirmation (No. 2) Bill [Lords]. As amended, considered; to be read the third time To-morrow.

Bradford Corporation Bill [Lords]. Reported, with Amendments, from the Police and Sanitary Committee; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

ARMY (VOLUNTEER RIFLE RANGES).

Copy presented, of Statement showing the allotment of the £170,000 provided in the Military Works Loan (Head 3, Sub-head 2), for the purpose of assisting Volunteers in connection with expenditure on Rifle Ranges [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

NAVAL EXPENDITURE AND MERCANTILE MARINE (GREAT BRITAIN, ETC).

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 29th June; *Sir John Colomb*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 284.]

CIVIL SERVICES (SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES, 1903-4).

Estimate presented, of the Further Sums required to be voted for the Service of the year ending 31st March, 1904 [by Command]; Referred to the Committee of Supply, and to be printed. [No. 285.]

CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION.

Copy presented, of Forty-seventh Report of the Commissioners, with Appendix [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

SUPERANNUATION ACT, 1887.

Copy presented, of Treasury Minute, dated 10th July, 1903, granting a retired allowance under the Act to Alfred Flood Baker, a second division clerk in the Savings Bank Department of the General Post Office [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

CHARITABLE DONATIONS AND BEQUESTS (IRELAND).

Copy presented, of Fifty-eighth Annual Report of the Commissioners of Charitable Donations and Bequests for Ireland [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

METROPOLITAN WATER COMPANIES (ACCOUNTS).

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 21st July; *Mr. Grant Lawson*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 286.]

GRENADA.

Copy presented, of Regulations for providing Gratuities to Prisoners on their discharge from Prison [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

Papers laid upon the Table by the Clerk of the House.

CHAMBER OF LONDON.

Annual Accounts of the Chamberlain of London for the year 1902 [by Act]; to be printed. [No. 287.]

LUNACY.

Copy of Return to the Lord Chancellor of the number of visits made, and the number of patients seen, by the several Commissioners in Lunacy during the six months ending on the 30th June, 1903 [by Act.]

PUBLIC WORKS LOANS BILL.

Copy ordered, "of Statements of Particulars of Loans of which the balances outstanding are proposed to be remitted or written off (in whole or in part) from the Assets of the Local Loans Fund." [*Mr. Elliot.*]

CANADA (PREFERENTIAL TARIFF FOR GOODS FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM.)

Return ordered, "of the yearly value of Imports for consumption from the United Kingdom and the United States into Canada since the Canadian Preferential Tariff for British goods came into force, and of the different rebates on the duty allowed on goods from the United Kingdom, and the yearly population of Canada during that period." [*Mr. Alfred Davies.*]

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Cooper's Hill College—Indian Students.

MR. HERBERT ROBERTS (Denbighshire, W.): To ask the Secretary of State for India will he state how many Indian students presented themselves at the entrance examination of Cooper's Hill College, and how many were selected for the Indian Services during the last three years; whether, seeing that the number of selected Indian students is limited to two, even if more are included in the list of successful candidates, and that the admission of these two Indian students is left to the discretion of the Principal of the College, irrespective of the merits of the candidates, he will say whether the candidates are selected according to the order of merit; whether the results of the entrance examinations are made public; and, if not, whether he will state the reasons for such a course.

(*Answered by Secretary Lord George Hamilton.*) During the last three years thirteen Indians presented themselves at the entrance examination of Cooper's Hill college; of these eight were unsuccessful; of the remaining five, one, who was nominated for the telegraph service, has for private reasons resigned; two have obtained, or are about to obtain, appointments; the other two are still students at the college. The candidates are selected in order of merit, as shown by the entrance examination, subject only to their possessing the qualifications laid down in the public prospectus of the college, and the result of the examination is communicated to the candidates individually.

Physical Training in Scotland—Progress of Inter-departmental Committee.

MR. SHAW-STEWART (Renfrewshire, E.): To ask the Lord Advocate if he can state what progress is being made by the Inter-Departmental Committee for drawing up a model course of physical exercises, as was recommended by the Royal Commission of Physical Training (Scotland).

(*Answered by Mr. A. Graham Murray.*) The Inter-Departmental Committee has already held several meetings. A model course of a tentative kind is now being framed, which, after the Committee has further considered it, may be tried experimentally.

Date of Opening of Mayfair Telephone Exchange.

CAPTAIN JESSEL (St. Pancras, S.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he can state when the Mayfair telephonic exchange will be ready for the use of the public.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) It is hoped that the Mayfair Exchange will be opened about the 1st of October.

General Post Office—Tube Attendants and Lobby Officers.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): To ask the Postmaster-General whether, in view of the fact that tube attendants are to be promoted no longer to lobby officers, he will state if they are to receive any compensation for this loss; and whether, as pensioned policemen are to be utilised for these positions, he will state if the pensions these men receive are taken into consideration when their wages are fixed, with a view towards depreciating the scales of wages previously paid for this class of work.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) I have under consideration a Memorial from the tube attendants for higher pay, but I do not propose to grant any compensation on account of the alteration made in the system of recruiting the class of lobby officers referred to by the hon. Member. A considerable economy has been effected by the employment of police pensioners, who are quite capable of performing the duty and better fitted for it than the tube attendants.

Glasgow Public Market—Cattle Weighbridge.

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.): To ask the hon. Member for North Hunts, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, if he can state the average weekly number of cattle weighed on the cattle weighbridge in the Glasgow public market between 1st January and 30th June of the current year, and the receipts of the Glasgow Corporation from this source as compared with their expenditure in erecting the weighbridge; and whether, in the interests of agriculture, he can take steps to secure the general provision of weighbridges for live cattle at markets.

(*Answered by Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes.*) We are informed by the town clerk that the average number of cattle passing each week over the corporation weighbridge in the Glasgow cattle market is 225, for which service fees averaging about 19s. 6d. weekly are received. The cost of the weighbridge was £176. All market authorities are bound already under the Markets and Fairs (Weighing of Cattle) Acts to provide accommodation for weighing live stock, unless they are expressly exempted by the Board of Agriculture from doing so on the ground that the number of animals sold is so small as to render the provision of weighing accommodation inexpedient.

Cotton, Woollen, and Iron Goods Return.

MR. WHITE RIDLEY (Stalybridge): To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he will grant the Returns as to Cotton, Woollen, and Iron goods standing on to-day's Notice Paper.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) These Returns would be very laborious, and to some extent impossible, to furnish, and having regard to the amount of work at present thrown on the Department I am afraid I cannot accede to my hon. friend's request.

The Return referred to is as follows:—

1. Cotton.—Return showing for each year from 1890 to 1902, inclusive—(*a*) with regard to the United Kingdom (1) total consumption of cotton in the United Kingdom, with particulars of the chief sources of supply; (2) total exports of cotton manufactures from the United Kingdom to foreign countries, to self-governing colonies, to India, and to other British possessions; (3) total imports of cotton manufactures into the United Kingdom; (*b*) with regard to the United States and Germany (1) total consumption of cotton; (2) total exports of cotton manufactures; (3) total imports of cotton manufactures, giving separately the amount of such imports from the United Kingdom.

2. Woollen Goods.—Return showing for each year from 1890 to 1902, inclusive—(*a*) with regard to the United Kingdom (1) total production of woollen manufactures; (2) total exports, quantities and values, of woollen manufactures to foreign countries, self-governing colonies, India, and other British possessions; (3) total imports of woollen manufactures; (*b*) with regard to the United States and Germany (1) total production of woollen manufactures; (2) total exports, quantities and values, of woollen manufactures; (3) total imports, quantities and values, of woollen manufactures, giving separately the quantities and values of such imports from the United Kingdom.

3. Iron and Steel.—Return showing for each year from 1890 to 1902, inclusive—(*a*) with regard to the United Kingdom (1) total production of iron and steel manufactures; (2) total exports, quantities and values, of iron and steel manufactures to foreign countries, to self-

governing colonies, to India, and to other British possessions; (3) total imports of iron and steel manufactures; (*b*) with regard to the United States and Germany (1) total production of iron and steel manufactures; (2) total exports, quantities and values, of iron and steel manufactures; (3) total imports, quantities and values, of iron and steel manufactures, giving separately the quantities and values of such imports from the United Kingdom.

Annual Leave of Customs Assistant Clerks.

MR. CLAUDE HAY (Shoreditch, Hoxton): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether, seeing that the assistant clerks employed upon checking duties in the Customs tea and dry goods branch were specially selected from the outports to fill the places of examining officers engaged upon checking duties, with salaries rising to £340 per annum and further prospects and annual leave of thirty-two working days, and that before entering upon such duties, owing to their nature, each assistant clerk was required to enter into a bond of £100, he would be willing to consider another application from these men for an increase in the amount of their annual leave.

(*Answered by Mr. Elliot.*) The assistant clerks employed on checking duties in the Customs tea and dry goods branch were not specially selected to fill the places of examining officers engaged upon checking duties with salaries rising to £340 per annum. The largest portion of the work now performed by assistant clerks with checking allowances was formerly done by examining officers of the second class, who only rise to £220. In no case are they employed on work which was specially assigned to first-class examining officers, nor do they fill places formerly held by officers of that class. I see no reason to depart from the decision previously announced.

Trout and Salmon Poaching in Lough Erne.

SIR HARRY SETON-KARR (St. Helens): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the poaching of salmon and trout that is carried on in Lough Erne, whereby, in particular, the salmon fishery of the River Erne is being injured; whether the Department of Agriculture, etc., in Ireland has taken, or is proposing to take, any steps to inquire into the alleged poaching and destruction of salmon and trout, and to prevent the same if carried on; and, generally, what steps are proposed to be taken for the better protection of salmon and trout fishing in the inland rivers of Ireland.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) The attention of the Department has been directed to a number of statements on this subject affecting the district mentioned, which, on investigation, proved to be without foundation. With regard to the protection of inland fisheries, the duty of protection rests primarily with the boards of conservators, who have been assisted by the Department in certain cases in which the protection was to a large extent for the benefit of the general public.

Application of Mr. Treston, of Gort, for Gun Licence.

MR. DUFFY (Galway, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland what decision has been arrived at in reference to the application made by Mr. Treston, of Gort, County Galway, for a gun licence.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) The resident magistrate will be prepared to issue a licence authorising Mr. Treston to keep a gun on his farm if application be made by the latter for such a licence.

Salaries of Irish National School Teachers.

MR. MACVEAGH (Down, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state if a national teacher, the average daily attendance at whose school for the year ending 31st March, 1903, reached 29·3 or 29·4, is debarred from receiving second grade salary; whether, in the event of the attendance for the year ending 31st March, 1904, reaching thirty or upwards, he will be entitled to be placed in the second grade; and whether promotion to a higher grade is made from year to year as average attendance warrants or is only awarded at the end of every three years on conditions similar to those relating to triennial increments.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) No teacher of a school in which the average attendance for the calendar year is less than thirty is eligible for promotion to the second grade. The promotion of teachers is contingent not only on a sufficient average attendance but also on training, position in school, ability and general attainments, good service, and seniority. A teacher must, as a rule, remain three years on the maximum of a grade before he is considered eligible for promotion to a higher grade.

Applications for Transfer from Constables stationed at Rasharkin, Co. Antrim.

MR. MACVEAGH: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state the number of constables who during the time Sergeant Long has been principal officer at Rasharkin, County Antrim, applied for transfer to other districts; to what religious denominations these constables belong; and the number who obtained such transfers.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) Six constables applied for transfers from this station during the period referred to (four years four months). They were all Roman Catholics.

Irish Land Act—Applications for posts in connection with new Department.

MR. LUNDON (Limerick, E.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether Civil servants in other Departments in England, Ireland, and Scotland will be eligible as candidates for positions in the Department about to be created in connection with the forthcoming Land Purchase Act; and to whom shall applications for such positions be addressed.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) Section 23 (8) of the Land Bill provides for the nomination, in the first place, of existing members of the staff of the Land Commission to assist the Estates Commissioners in the performance of their duties. It is not practicable, at present, to estimate the extent of the new Department, or to state whether it will be necessary to appoint to it persons not already on the Land Commission staff. All nominations and appointments will be made by the Lord Lieutenant.

Distribution of South African War Medals.

MR. MANSFIELD (Lincolnshire, Spalding): To ask the Secretary of State for War if he will say whether the Army Order in South Africa to the effect that all medal rolls were to be rendered before 31st July, 1901, was complied with; and can he say whether the medals for these rolls have all been distributed; and whether any regiments which proceeded to South Africa after July, 1901, have received their medals.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*) The reply to the first part of the Question is in the affirmative. As regards the second part, the medals of all the regiments which proceeded to South Africa after 31st July, 1901 have been issued, with one or two exceptions where the rolls have been sent to Woolwich for medals to be issued or the rolls themselves are still under examination at the War Office.

Improved Wages in Dockyard Trades.

MR. REGINALD LUCAS (Portsmouth): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether any decisions have been arrived at with regard to the petitions of various trades in the Royal dockyards; and when such decisions will be communicated to the men concerned.

(*Answered by Mr. Arnold-Forster.*) I must beg to refer my hon. friend to the replies given to the similar Questions asked by the hon. Member for Newington on the 23rd instant† and to the hon. Member for Devonport on the 27th instant,‡ as I have nothing to add at present to the information given on those occasions.

Paymasters in the Navy.

MR. JOHN HOWARD (Kent, Faversham): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether any decision has been arrived at as to the readjustment of the age at which accountant officers of the Navy reach their relative rank; and whether the Admiralty proposes to abolish the rank of staff-paymaster and to promote all paymasters of eight years service to the rank of fleet-paymaster.

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† See page 54.

‡ See page 310.

(*Answered by Mr. Arnold-Forster*). I am afraid that I am not yet in a position to announce the decision of the Board on this subject, which is still under consideration. As I have stated on other occasions, I think it would be inconvenient, pending the decision of the Board on the question as a whole, to deal separately with points such as that raised in the latter part of the hon. Member's inquiry.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Army Text Books.

SIR FRANCIS EVANS (Maidstone): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that it is impossible to obtain by purchase or otherwise a copy of the King's Regulations, or the Manual of Military Engineering, and the several other books required by officers preparing for their promotion examinations; and, if so, whether he will order the reprint of such books.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Lord STANLEY, Lancashire, Westhoughton): As I explained to the House on a previous occasion several of the text-books are under revision, owing to changes in Army organisation and duties, but every effort is being made to complete the work as rapidly as possible. It has been found necessary in many cases to thoroughly re-write the books concerned, which involves considerable care and time. In most cases, therefore, a reprint of the old work would be useless. As regards the King's Regulations, a few copies can be purchased from the War Office in the usual manner.

Hospital for Royal Naval College, Osborne.

MAJOR SEELY (Isle of Wight): I beg to ask the Civil Lord of the Admiralty whether it has been decided not to convert the barracks at East Cowes into an infectious hospital in connection with the Royal Naval College at Osborne.

THE CIVIL LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. PRETYMAN, Suffolk, Woodbridge): It has been decided, owing to the continued insanitary state of the foreshore at East Cowes not to carry out the proposed conversion of the barracks at the present time, but to erect a small infectious hospital on another site.

Imports of British Colonies.

MR. LEVY (Leicestershire, Loughborough): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if his attention has been directed to the fact that 26 per cent. of the total imports of British colonies consist of food, raw material, and live stock, of which the United Kingdom does not produce sufficient for its own needs, or does not produce at all; and, if so, whether he will furnish the House with figures on the subject.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN, Birmingham, W.): The Return promised to the hon. Member for the High Peak Division of Derbyshire will give the hon. Member the information he desires.†

Canada and Germany.

MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL (Oldham): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the representatives of Canada, or of any other colony, expressed an opinion at the Colonial Conference that the mother country was not sufficiently protecting her children in the matter of German discrimination against Canada, or any desire that the mother country should retaliate on Germany by imposing duties on German goods; and whether he will lay upon the Table the Report of the discussion at the Conference on this subject, and of the subsequent discussion between the Canadian Minister and himself.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: The opinion of the members of the Conference has been summarised in the Paper on the subject already published. I have already stated in reply to the hon. Member for Dundee, on the 22nd of June,† that nothing further can be published as to what took place at the Conference, because of the objections taken to such a course by some of the colonial representatives.

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† See page 311.

Trinidad Disturbances.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies, in view of the fact that in the Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the recent disturbances at Port of Spain, Trinidad, in connection with the water ordinance, it is stated that there was absolutely no justification for the use of the bayonet by the police, will he state whether the members of the police force by whom the bayonet was used have been discovered; and will compensation be granted to the relatives of those persons who lost their lives.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: The hon. Member will see from the Papers published that I have ordered a special inquiry. The Chief Justice of British Guiana has now been appointed a special Commissioner to inquire into the conduct of the police on the occasion. Until he has reported I am unable to consider any question of compensation.

Canadian Tariff Policy.

Mr. LABOUCHERE (Northampton): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether his attention has been called to the statement made by the Finance Minister of the Dominion in his last budget speech, that any additional tariff preference would only be granted to the mother country for and in consideration of the preference that Canada has asked for her products in the markets of Great Britain; whether any step has been taken by him to learn whether the word products is limited to food supplies, and, if not, what other products are included; and whether he has already informed the Dominion Government, or, if not, whether he will inform that Government, that His Majesty's Government has assured this House that it will not tax raw material.

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I have seen the statement to which the hon. Member refers. It does not add anything to the statement of the position of the Dominion Government as defined in the Memorandum laid before the Conference of last year and already published. With regard to the last part of the hon. Member's Question the usual sources of information as to statements made in the House are available to the Dominion Government, and I have not thought it necessary to make any communication to them on the subject.

MR. D. A. THOMAS (Merthyr Tydvil): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether his attention has been called to the statement made to the Dominion Parliament by the Canadian Finance Minister in April, and recorded in the Canadian Sessional Paper No. 10A, to the effect that at the time of the Conference last year in London Mr. Fielding frankly told the Colonial Secretary that, while his Government were prepared to rearrange their tariff so as to give Great Britain a preference over the foreign competitor, they were not prepared, as between the British and the Canadian manufacturer, to make any further reduction in their tariff which would operate to the advantage of the former; and will he either cause the Canadian Sessional Paper No. 10A, containing the correspondence in connection with the German tariff, to be issued as a Parliamentary Paper, or secure copies for hon. Members who may wish to have them.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: The statement to which the hon. Member refers appears to be the speech of the Canadian Minister of Finance in introducing the Budget in April last. In that speech he referred to the Memorandum published in the Conference Blue-book, which the Question does not adequately summarise. As soon as I can obtain copies of the Canadian Sessional Paper referred to by the hon. Member I will lay it before Parliament.

Religious Orders in France.

MR. T. L. CORBETT (Down, N.): beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether His Majesty's Government has received any recent despatch from the French Government relating to their policy in dealing with various religious orders in France.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxxiv., 63.

MR. MACVEAGH (Down, S.): May I ask the noble Lord whether, before entering into further negotiations, he will recommend the appointment of a Royal Commission to ascertain the views of Orangemen on the subject?

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Lord CRANBORNE, Rochester): The communications recived from the French Government have reference to the treatment of the two English Religious Foundations—the Benedictines at Douai and the Passionist Fathers at Paris. The most recent note received by His Majesty's Ambassador in Paris from the French Government is dated the 20th of March last, but some verbal communications have since passed. Papers on the subject are now being prepared for presentation to Parliament.

MR. T. L. CORBETT: Has the French Government made any protest against the language used by the Under Secretary?

LORD CRANBORNE: Not that I am aware of.

North Sea Fisheries Investigation.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, in view of the fact that France, equally with other countries of Europe, will benefit through any information in regard to fish habits that may be gained under the International Scheme of North Sea Fisheries Investigation, will the British Government consider the expediency of inviting the French Government to participate in the scheme.

LORD CRANBORNE: By desire of the Conference which met at Stockholm in June, 1899, an invitation was addressed by Sweden to the French Government to participate in the investigation. The French Government, however, felt themselves unable to accept the invitation.

Revenue Returns.

MR. HERBERT ROBERTS (Denbighshire, W.): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, whether, in reference to the Annual Return showing the amount contributed by England, Scotland, and Ireland, respectively, to the revenue collected by Imperial Officers; the expenditure on English, Scottish, and Irish services met out of such revenue; and the balances of revenue contributed by England, Scotland, and Ireland, respectively, which are available for Imperial expenditure, he will consider whether, in future Returns, this information can be given for Wales under a separate heading.

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. RITCHIE, Croydon): It would be impossible to distinguish accurately between England and Wales as regards either revenue or expenditure.

Cost of Education.

MR. ALFRED DAVIES (Carmarthen Boroughs): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will state in detail, as far as he can, the cost of education in all its branches, more especially schools, colleges, Universities, and museums, to the National Exchequer.

*MR. RITCHIE: I can only refer the hon. Member to the Civil Service Estimates (Votes in Class IV., the Vote for the Irish Department of Agriculture in Class II. and Sub-head E. of the Vote for the Board of Agriculture, England, in the same Class) where he will find the sums voted for the services in question. In addition, certain sums are paid annually from the Consolidated Fund—viz., £7,000 to each of the three Queen's Colleges in Ireland, and various small and miscellaneous sums which will be found set out on pages 55 and 56 of the Finance Accounts 1902–3, (House of Commons Paper 219 of 1903).

MR. ALFRED DAVIES: Will the right hon. Gentleman bear in mind that I have been in the library and had the assistance of the librarian and have been unable to get these particulars? I will repeat the Question this day week in the hope that I may get a full reply.

*MR. RITCHIE: I do not think a public Department should be called upon to make up statistical information for hon. Members when they can obtain it for themselves. I have given the hon. Member the full information which will enable him to obtain what he requires without the assistance of the librarian.

Lightships and Wireless Telegraphy.

MAJOR SEELY: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether the work of connecting certain lightships with the shore by wireless telegraphy for life-saving purposes has been commenced; if not, when it will be commenced; and when the further connection of lightships with the shore by these means is going to be taken in hand.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central): I must refer my hon. and gallant friend to the reply given him on June 30th.† We have every intention of carrying out that amount of work with all possible expedition, but at present we are awaiting some amended financial proposals from the Marconi Company.

Statistics of British Imports.

MR. D. A. THOMAS: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether, in view of the bearing on the fiscal inquiry of the Return promised to the hon. Member for the High Peak Division in reference to the imports from foreign countries into British Possessions,‡ the often misleading character of trade statistics when taken for a single year only, and the desirability of showing the growth of the imports in question, he will consider the advisability of extending the Return so as to cover several years prior to the last available year.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: As I informed the hon. Member on Monday§ I am not prepared to agree to the extension asked for, which would cause great delay in the publication of the Return.

The Board of Trade and the Fiscal Inquiry.

MR. D. A. THOMAS: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if, in view of the pressure on his Department at the present time to expeditiously furnish Statistical Returns relating to Imperial trade, he will consider the desirability of making additions to his staff either temporary or permanent?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: Every effort is being and will be made to cope with the exceptional pressure of work thrown on the Board of Trade by means of addition to staff and otherwise. I cannot say whether the additions to the staff will be permanent.

French Commercial Policy.

SIR WILLIAM HOLLAND (Yorkshire, W.R., Rotherham): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether any country adopting a retaliatory fiscal policy has access to the French market on more favourable terms than the United Kingdom.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: The answer is in the negative.

Fiscal Inquiry.

SIR WILLIAM HOLLAND: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether the Cabinet will, in its investigations as to the alleged evil effects of the dumping down of foreign imports below cost, also inquire as to the benefits which have accrued to the United Kingdom from such imports, with the view of ascertaining whether this country has been on the whole advantaged or otherwise thereby.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: The inquiry will naturally include both sides of the question.

SIR WILLIAM HOLLAND: Can the right hon. Gentleman say to what Member of the Cabinet information on this point should be addressed?

[No answer was returned.]

Post Office—Wages Inquiry.

MR. JAMES O'CONNOR (Wicklow, W.): I beg to ask the Postmaster-General if he is yet in a position to announce the constitution of the Wages Inquiry Committee.

THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL (Mr. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN, Worcestershire, E.): No, Sir.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxxiv, 923.

‡ See page 311.

§ See page 330.

MR. JAMES O'CONNOR: When will the right hon. Gentleman be in a position to make the announcement?

MR. AUSTEN CHAMBERLAIN: I hope before the House adjourns, but I cannot give a definite date.

Vaccination Exemption Applications at Brentford Police Court.

MR. LEVY: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he can state the number of times application has been made for exemption from vaccination at the Brentford Police Court during the last two years, and the number of times such application has been refused.

THE UNDER-SECRETARY TO THE HOME OFFICE (Mr. COCHRANE, Ayrshire, N.): I am informed by the magistrates' clerk that no record is kept of the number of applications or refusals, but that eight exemption certificates have been granted in the last two years at the Brentford Court.

MR. LEVY: Will instructions be given to have records kept in future?

MR. COCHRANE: I must ask for notice of that.

Island of Lewis.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate if he will state whether the Secretary for Scotland is now prepared to announce the policy of the Congested Districts Board in regard to the recommendations contained in the Report of the Crofters' Commission on the social condition of the people of Lewis.

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. A. GRAHAM MURRAY, Buteshire): The Congested Districts Amendment Bill, now before Parliament, deals with certain recommendations contained in the Report referred to. The Secretary for Scotland awaits final communication from the Local Advisory Committee in the Lews before deciding upon any policy in regard to the remaining recommendations. It will not be possible to do all that the Secretary for Scotland thinks necessary, unless the amending Bill, now before the House of Commons, should pass into law.

Queen Victoria—Proposed Statue in Westminster Hall.

MR. PLUMMER (Newcastle-on-Tyne): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the Government will consider the question of commissioning a sculptor to execute a statue of Her late Majesty Queen Victoria, to be placed in Westminster Hall, in continuation of the series of other statues already therein.

MR. ARTHUR LEE (Hampshire, Fareham): May I at the same time ask whether the right hon. Gentleman will consider the advisability of removing from Westminster Hall the whole of the statues now there, as I am informed that they are neither portraits nor works of art.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): It is perfectly true that the statues to which the hon. Gentleman the Member for Fareham refers are not portraits, because they have all been made in the course of the last thirty years. The Government are of opinion that if there is to be a series of statues of Sovereigns of Great Britain in Westminster Hall, it is well worthy of consideration whether a statue of Her late Majesty should not be added.

Royal Commission of Civil Service Superannuation.

MR. JAMES O'CONNOR: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury if the Royal Commission on Civil Service Superannuation has yet completed its inquiry; and, if so, when will the Report be presented.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The Report is now, I am informed, under consideration, and will, I believe, be presented at an early date.

Germany and Canada.

MR. LABOUCHERE: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether his attention has been called to the letter of Sir Wilfrid Laurier to Herr Boff in November last, in which, replying to a letter from that gentleman stating that Germany is prepared to negotiate a commercial treaty between her and Canada in 1903, he says that if Germany is prepared at once to negotiate such a treaty the Dominion Government would be happy to discuss its terms; and to the letter of the same month to Herr Boff from the Finance Minister of the Dominion, in which he says that the Dominion Government would at a convenient moment be prepared to consider with Germany the general question of trade relations between the two countries, but that the making of a formal treaty would require the appointment of plenipotentiaries by His Majesty the German Emperor and by His Majesty the King of Great Britain, on behalf of Canada; and whether, should the Dominion Government entertain the same opinion at present, His Majesty's Government would be prepared to advise His Majesty to appoint plenipotentiaries on behalf of Canada with the concurrence of the Dominion Government; and whether the Dominion Government has at any time suggested to His Majesty's Government that retaliatory duties should be either imposed or threatened to be imposed on German goods entering the United Kingdom should Germany refuse to admit Canadian imports on the most-favoured-nation terms.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I understand that the Colonial Office has not received, officially or unofficially, any request from Canada for the appointment of a plenipotentiary to negotiate a commercial treaty with Germany on behalf of the Dominion. The only communications that we have had from Canada have already been published.

MOTOR-CARS BILL [LORDS].

Read the first time; to be read a second time upon Friday, and to be printed. [Bill 301.]

NEW BILL.

PUBLIC WORKS LOANS BILL.

"To grant money for the purpose of certain local loans out of the Local Loans Fund; and for other purposes relating to local loans." Presented by Mr. Elliot; to be read a second time to-morrow, and to be printed. [Bill 300.]

SUGAR CONVENTION BILL.

[SECOND READING.]

Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Amendment proposed to Question [28th July], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Which Amendment was—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day three months.'"—(*Mr. Lough.*)

Question again proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

Debate resumed.

MR. GRIFFITH BOSCAWEN (Kent, Tonbridge): I suppose it is inevitable that in this debate there should be references made to the fiscal inquiry now pending, although I confess I do not myself see exactly what connection there is between this Bill and the scheme of the right hon. Gentleman the Colonial Secretary. Whatever may be said in regard to it, that scheme, as far as practical politics goes, is a new question; whereas the subject of the sugar bounties is an old one, which has occupied the attention of successive Governments and successive Houses of Parliament for a great many years. One would think, from speeches made on both sides of the House, that the Government had suddenly made a great plunge and adopted an entirely new policy in pressing for the abolition of the sugar bounties. [MR. GIBSON BOWLES: Hear hear.] My hon. friend the Member for King's Lynn cheers that statement, but surely he knows, and the country knows, that this question has been before it for upwards of forty years. As long ago as 1862 a Liberal Government caused a Convention of Foreign Powers to be called in order to discuss this very question, and a few years later Mr. Gladstone urged the abolition of the sugar bounties on the ground that they were bad for the producer, the importer, and the consumer alike. Both parties in the State have, in successive years and on many occasions, endeavoured to get this question settled, but now we are told that it is contrary to free trade. I approached the question of free trade with considerable fear, for if we take the statement of those who have always been regarded as the leading free traders of this country, they have never for one moment regarded sugar bounties as anything but an abomination, and they have desired to get rid of them as a step in the direction of free trade. Mr. Cobden said—

> "What we free traders want is that every natural source of supply should be open to us, as Nature and Nature's God intended it should be, without artificial interference."

And the late Mr. Gladstone—whose orthodoxy as a free trader no one would doubt—in 1881, said—

> "We do not regard with any satisfaction the system under which an artificial advantage is given in our markets to the product of foreign labour—the principle to be observed being that of equality. Some people say that it is a good thing, because the consumer gets the benefit of it, but I do not think that any benefit founded on inequality and injustice can bring good even to the consumer."

Then again, the late Lord Farrer, another orthodox free trader, speaking as lately as the year 1897, to the Cobden Club, used these words—

> "Upon this point (sugar bounties) we must walk warily. We must admit to the fullest degree that sugar bounties are an abomination; and we must not, because they make sugar a little cheaper in this country, say that they ought to be continued. If Mr. Chamberlain were asked in any fair way to get foreign nations to do away with their bounties, we ought to wish him God speed."

My hon. friend the Member for King's Lynn and hon. Gentlemen opposite ironically cheer these sentiments! What is the meaning of it? Surely the Government have gone a very long step forward towards doing what Lord Farrer said they would wish Mr. Chamberlain "God-speed" in doing. They have succeeded in getting foreign nations to agree to the abolition of sugar bounties. How is it, therefore, when this thing has been accomplished—a thing which both Parties have been striving for for years, we have this determined opposition to the carrying out of this most eminently laudable free trade doctrine.

What are the objections to the Sugar Bounties Convention and to this Bill? They are brought forward I frankly admit for one particular object—viz., to save some of our colonies from ruin. The Sugar Bounty system has well nigh ruined the West Indian colonies. Some hon. Members appear to doubt that and seem to think that if one trade is destroyed another can be established in its place, and that all the West Indies have to do in order to regain their prosperity is to start some other trade. That, however, is not a very nice prospect for the West Indian planter, who has sunk his capital in the sugar industry. But is it true that other trades can be set up which will restore the prosperity of the islands? One or two of the islands have been enabled to do this, but a Royal Commission has stated specifically that some of the West Indian Islands depend on sugar alone, and if the trade in it were destroyed destruction awaited them. In the case of Barbados, British Guiana, and the Windward and Leeward Islands this is the case, and can hon. Members contemplate with equanimity the destruction of the trade of these colonies? Are we right or not in trying to save them? Are we going to allow them to be destroyed by the bounty system when we have ready to our hands a weapon which will enable us to get rid of it? How far are hon. Members prepared to go? Are they prepared to see certain trades in this country destroyed also by the bounty system? I venture to say that if any trade in this country were threatened as the West Indian trade is, hon. Members opposite would be the very first to urge the Government to conclude a convention whereby the bounties might be abolished. What then are the specific objections to this Bill? We are told in the first place that the Convention and the Bill based upon it, will not benefit the colonies to any appreciable extent, and secondly, even if it does it will inflict a heavy burden on the English consumer and on the manufacturer who depends on sugar as a raw material.

Take first the case of the colonies. Is it proved that this Convention will not benefit them? I am informed that the Royal Commission took the view that the abolition of the sugar bounties would be of enormous benefit to the colonies. Indeed, the Commission said it was the only thing which could benefit them. It is not a question of the price of sugar. It is a question of credit, and the reason why our colonies have fallen so far behind is that they have been unable to obtain sufficient credit to enable them to develop their estates, to put in the best machinery, and to adopt the best methods of cultivation. My hon. friend the Member for King's Lynn made a great point as to the unproductive character of the methods employed in the West Indies. He seemed to think that because they had not been progressive nothing should be done for them. He seemed to forget the reason. I venture to say that if you get rid of the bounties, capital will flow into the West Indies, and the inhabitants will have an opportunity of developing their resources, of improving their methods, and of producing sugar more cheaply than can be possible so long as the bounties exist. But we are told that if we benefit the West Indies we shall greatly increase the cost to the British consumer, and it is practically suggested that the evil would be so great that we ought to do nothing for the colonies. We have heard all kinds of prophecy, and we have had this statement put forward in every shape and form, but I think the most remarkable form of all was that advanced last night by the hon. and learned Member for the Launceston Division, who stated that the bounties had reduced the price of sugar to the full extent of the bounty given. I think that was a ludicrous argument. It is not true in fact, neither is it in conformity with any theory I have ever seen put forward. That it is not true in fact can easily be proved. We have been informed by the President of the Board of Trade that the cost of production of sugar in Germany and Austria is about £8 15s. per ton. The bounty amounts to £5 per ton, and consequently if the bounty had reduced the price of sugar by the full amount, sugar would have been sold here at £3 15s. a ton, whereas the price has never fallen to anything like that amount. It has never gone below £6 or £7 a ton. If it has not so fallen then I say the price will not rise in a like degree. No doubt the greater part of the bounty does not go to the benefit of the consumer in this country, it goes into the pockets of the producers of sugar in Germany and Austria. If you abolish the bounties my belief is that although there may be a slight rise on present prices, it will be very small indeed, and it will very soon be equalised by the fact that the cane-producing countries of the world will produce a great deal more sugar; there will be free competition, and cheaper methods of production, tending to reduce the price of sugar. When a bounty is put on an article a very large part of it naturally goes in the first instance towards countervailing the superior natural advantages of the countries against which it is directed, and inasmuch as the West Indies can now produce sugar cheaper than it can be done in Europe, a large part of the bounty goes to countervail that advantage. It is quite untrue that the producer gives the whole of the bounty to the consumer; he only gives just enough to secure the market and he pockets the rest. Therefore it is monstrous to suggest that the abolition of the bounties will increase the price of the article by the full amount of the bounty.

But suppose you do not abolish the bounties. Suppose you permit the present system to go on. What is going to happen? You will create an absolute monopoly on the part of the German and Austrian producer of beet sugar, and he will, of course, when once he has secured the monopoly in our market, proceed to raise the price of sugar to any extent he likes. We are told that the confectionery trade will suffer. I think it will suffer a very great deal more if the present bounty system is allowed to continue. It may gain at the present moment by the temporary cheapness of sugar, but it will suffer later on by having to pay anything the German or Austrian producer may choose to charge. Last year 72 per cent. of the sugar imported into this country came from Germany and Austria. The Germans and Austrians have no doubt gone to very great expense in giving these bounties, but we may be sure that they have not been given merely to benefit the English consumer. The object has been to obtain the mastery of our markets and to drive out cane sugar altogether, as well as to get rid of other competitors in the beet sugar industry. That they have nearly done, for France has dropped far behind in the race, and when they finally succeed they will be able to raise the price of sugar to any extent they like. We hear a great deal about the confectionery trade, but where will it be if hon. Members, by conniving at the keeping up of the bounty system, pave the way for raising the price of sugar to a prohibitive amount? Where will it be if the Germans obtain the mastery of our markets? We have heard that we are placing the control of our fiscal arrangements in the hands of a foreign Convention. But after all that Convention only exists in order to see that the Powers agreeing to it carry out the Convention. We are no worse off than any other nation in that respect. If we do not abolish the sugar bounties we shall be placing the control of our sugar supply absolutely and entirely in the hands of a foreign sugar ring, and that would be far more dangerous to this country than allowing a foreign Convention, on which we are represented equally with other nations, to see that all parties to it carry out their agreement. There is nothing more serious and nothing more likely to damage our people in the future than allowing the control of our food supplies to fall into the hands of foreign rings. We had an example of that last year in connection with the beef trade. An American ring controlling that trade put up the price of beef to every consumer in this country from 1d. to 2d. per lb. At that time we in this House were discussing the shilling registration duty on corn, and although we seemed to be much concerned about the possible effects of that in increasing the cost of the foods of the people, we paid no attention whatever to the action of the foreign beef ring, which had really increased the price of meat and inflicted enormous hardships on our people. I again assert that the abolition of sugar bounties will not really put up the price of sugar except to a very small extent, whereas if we allow the control of our sugar supply to remain in the hands of those who pay the bounties, and have thus obtained the mastery of our markets, the effect upon our people will be very serious indeed. I do not think I need labour the point further.

For my part I candidly confess that I do not understand the objection of hon. Members opposite to this Bill. I am not going so far as to say that because we ratified the Convention last November we are therefore bound to carry it out. Of course we retain our freedom of action, but we are, I say, bound to carry it out unless we can show very strong reasons indeed for going back on our policy. To my mind there seems every reason for going forward with the policy of abolishing the bounties—a policy which every Government for the last forty years has striven to bring about. Like everbody else, I do not wish to see the destruction of the confectionery trade; but what will happen to it if the victorious German or the victorious Austrian, having destroyed the West Indian sugar planters and the sugar refiners of this country, then proceeds by a system of bounties to destroy the confectionery trade? Suppose they gave large bounties to export confectionery from Germany and Austria, and dumped the goods down here, so that English confectioners would be unable to compete with them. What would be the position of the confectionery trade then? Will hon. Members still say that we have no right to interfere with the bounty system? Will they still say that it is far better to leave the foreigner to make these presents to English consumers. I venture to say they will take an exactly opposite line, and I can see the hon. Member for West Islington come here, hat in hand, asking the Government to get rid of the bounties because they are ruining the English confectionery trade. The same principle applies all round, whether we are free traders or protectionists. Bounties are an unnatural interference with the course of trade; and because this Bill will enable us to get rid of them, and will at the same time give a chance to our colonies and to our home refiners, I hope the Government will continue in their policy, and, by carrying this Bill through, will consummate what has been the object of this country for so many years.

*MR. KEARLEY (Devonport): The assumption underlying the speech of the hon. Member for Tonbridge is that the Bill will abolish sugar bounties, but I would like to point out that under its provisions a permanent bounty is going to be set up far higher than the official bounty given by various countries for many years past. His argument as to what will happen unless these bounties are abolished therefore falls to the ground. It is clear that bounties are not going to be abolished at all. The hon. Member has pointed out some terrible things that are going to happen to us at the hands of certain Continental sugar producers if bounties are not abolished. He says that Germany and Austria will get us under their heels, and have a monopoly of our trade, but he seems to forget that the total sugar production of the world is increasing at a great rate, and that therefore we need never be in the position of being under the heels of either Germany or Austria. The hon. Member has not perhaps studied the statistics as to the production of cane sugar, but I may tell him that the quantity produced has in the last two or three years increased by considerably more than a million tons, therefore we are not so dependent on the action of Germany or Austria as he seems to think.

MR. GRIFFITH BOSCAWEN: Seventy-two per cent. of our sugar imports last year were German.

*MR. KEARLEY: There is such a thing as sugar production in countries outside Europe, and the statistics show that what the hon. Member has predicted cannot possibly happen. What has induced the Government to join this Convention? They have advanced two reasons — first, that our West Indian colonies are being ruined by the bounty system, and secondly, that British sugar refining is also being ruined. I have a few words to say about the arguments used by the President of the Board of Trade in building up the Government case. He told us in November last, and he practically repeated the same thing yesterday, that bounties are responsible for the over-production of sugar, and that that over-production has caused wild fluctuations in prices. He argued that were the bounties abolished the wild fluctuations would cease and we should have a natural and normal price of sugar. He says that these wild fluctuations of the past twenty years have been occasioned solely by the bounties. What are the facts? In fifteen of those twenty years the only bounty that existed was what is termed the official bounty. For the last five years there has been another bounty—created by the cartel system. The official bounties in Germany and Austria, the two largest exporters of sugar, amounted to from 1s. to 1s. 2d. per cwt., so that for the fifteen years before the cartel system came into existence the bounty was, speaking roughly, 1s per cwt. In the last five years the creation of the cartel has increased the bounty to 4s. 6d. or 5s. Now, between 1882 and 1897, the fluctuations in the price of sugar ranged from 8s. to 28s. per cwt., while in the last five years, although the bounty has been four times as great, the fluctuation has only been from 6s. to 12s. 6d. What becomes, then, of his argument that the bounties are the cause of these wild fluctuations? Then again the right hon. Gentleman says that the bounty of 1s. per cwt. has caused over-production. I always thought that over-production caused prices to fall, and, consequently, the price of sugar should have fallen continuously, but it has not. Let me tell the right hon. Gentleman what has really caused the fluctuations. He has no practical knowledge of the trade; he only gives the views of the experts who have coached him; and I want to show him how utterly fallacious is the statement that the fluctuations in price have been occasioned by this 1s. bounty. In 1882 the price of sugar was 23s. 6d. per cwt.; in 1884 it had fallen to 10s. Was that fall brought about by the 1s. bounty? No. What was the real cause of it? It was the law of supply and demand. At the end of each sugar year statistics are collected showing the amount of sugar on hand from the old crop. In 1884 it was found that the carry over of sugar was 1,200,000 tons—more than sufficient to supply this country for the coming year. Naturally this had a very disconcerting effect on the market, and prices tumbled down to 10s. per cwt. The 1s. bounty had nothing whatever to do with the fall. In 1889 sugar suddenly shot up to 28s. per cwt.—the highest price reached for 25 years. What was the cause of that? Was it the 1s. bounty? No. It was found that the carry over at the end of the year was only 473,000 tons. That influenced the market immediately and produced speculation which led to very high prices. I think I have disposed of the contention that these wild fluctuations were occasioned by the 1s. bounty.

The right hon. Gentleman has told us that the West Indies can produce sugar more cheaply than Europe, but that these wild fluctuations in price prevent capital going into the colonies, and he wants the House to believe that when these bounties are abolished we shall have a normal and natural price of sugar. We shall have nothing of the sort. We shall still have the same variations in the market. The Colonial Secretary knows something about business. Will he not admit that fluctuations are occasioned by outside circumstances, such as the state of the crops and their magnitude or their expected failure. If the Government base their case on the assumption that prosperity will be brought back to the West Indies by stability of prices I would not give much for their future prospects. It is preposterous to say that in the future the price of sugar will not be determined by supply and demand. But according to the reasoning of the President of the Board of Trade, cost of production is to govern prices in the future. The right hon. Gentleman said that the price of sugar in the future will not be greater than the average of the past.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central): No; I said I believed the fluctuations in the price of sugar in the future would not be higher than the average.

*MR. KEARLEY: We have had it said over and over again that the price of sugar in the future would not be higher than the average.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I never said that. It would be absurd. I always admitted that the price of sugar is subject to fluctuations, but that those fluctuations would sometimes be above the normal natural price and sometimes below.

*MR. KEARLEY: What does the right hon. Gentleman mean by the normal and natural price of sugar? What does he mean by drawing our attention to the fact that the cost of production in the West Indies is £8 10s. per ton and in European countries £8 15s.?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: The hon. Member is under a misapprehension. I was speaking of the average price when I said that it would not be higher than it had been in the past. That is very different from saying the price would never be higher than the average price in the past.

*MR. KEARLEY: The average price in the future will not be higher than the average price in the past. What is the average price of sugar. How does the right hon. Gentleman arrive at it.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: I took the average for ten years.

*MR. KEARLEY: In 15 years the price has fluctuated from 5s. 9d. to 28s. The whole case for the Bill is based on stability of price; and when the right hon. Gentleman is asked what the average price is he takes the average price for the past ten years, and on such a happy-go-lucky calculation contends that sugar will be no dearer in the future than in the past. It is on these grounds that we are asked to go into this Convention? That brings me to another general proposition. The right hon. Gentleman says—

> "That even if the interests of consumers of sugar and users of sugar did suffer from the abolition of bounties, that abolition would still be an object for which we ought to strive."

Why? There is no divine law against bounties. They are not immoral in themselves. Each bounty, I maintain, should be considered on its merits. The effect of these sugar bounties is to give buyers in this country an advantage in price which they would not otherwise enjoy. I do not think it can be shown that any home or competing industry is suffering. It has been stated that a great number of sugar refineries have disappeared. But it still has to be proved that the refining industry has been ruined by these bounties. The fact is the manufacturers of this country get the advantage of the bounties, or they could not carry on their trade. Remember, it is only the official bounty which is to be abolished under this Bill. The pseudo bounty, created by the eartel system, is going to remain. If the 1s. bounty has ruined the sugar refiners of this country they will continue to be ruined by the larger cartel bounty. Thirty years ago there were thirty or forty sugar refineries scattered about the country; many of them have now disappeared, and the conclusion is jumped at that they have been ruined by the bounty system. As a matter of fact the bounties have had nothing to do with it. They have been vanquished in competition with English competitors. Take the case of Greenock. Have the refineries there been ruined by the competition of foreigners? The responsible authors of their decline were the two successful firms of the present day, Tate's and Lyle's. Lyle was originally a Greenock refiner in a small way.

MR. JAMES REID (Greenock): He was in a large way. He had a refinery capable of turning out 1,500 tons a week.

MR. KEARLEY: And now he turns out double the quantity. He left Greenock because he found it was not a suitable centre for carrying on his operations, and in view of the changed condition of affairs as well as with a view to the development of beet refining, he left Greenock to come to London. He has increased in wealth and importance, and those who remained behind in Greenock have fallen out, being unable to face the competition of their old townsman Lyle, or of Tate. The Colonial Secretary says: "Oh yes, but Tate's have a special patent process which has placed them practically outside the region of competition." That is absolutely not the case. It is true that Tate's have enjoyed the benefit of a certain patent, but they have not had a monopoly of it. The patent from which Tate's cubes proceed was acquired by Tate in 1876, when Tate was an ordinary small refiner. But that patent was owned conjointly by one of the oldest refining firm in the country—Messrs. Martineau & Sons—a firm with an existence of 100 years behind them, and all the benefits of an old connection. What happened? Tate amassed an immense fortune, and his sugar is preeminent throughout the country, but the old firm of Martineau & Sons failed. Why was this? On the one hand you have a new man with a new equipment, who, working according to modern ideas, kept himself to the front, feared no competition, faced the competition of Europe, was the better for it, was not defeated, and is now one of the greatest refiners. On the other hand you have this old firm, with the traditions of a hundred years of trade, working with obsolete machinery, but who, notwithstanding the advantage of the patent which the Colonial Secretary says is responsible for Tate's position, went under. Lyle had no patent of any sort or description, and he is still doing well. Tate and Lyle between them turn out as much sugar as the whole of the thirty refiners who existed thirty years ago turned out. I will go further. These two refiners between them turn out more domestic sugar than all the other refiners in the country. The output of Tate and Lyle is estimated at 300,000 tons a year, while that of all the other refiners amounts to 360,000 tons, of which 120,000 is brewers' invert. The refining industry of this country is not ruined; it is a prosperous industry. Anybody who likes to embark upon it with up-to-date machinery, capital, and business ability, is bound to make a large fortune. One of the grounds upon which we are being called upon to support this Bill is that the sugar refining industry of the country is being ruined, but I say there is no sign of any such ruin.

The only remaining question is that of the West Indies. Before I come to that let me say a word more about the bounties. The President of the Board of Trade last night said they amounted to 4s. 6d. or 5s. Does he contend that the English refiner does not get the full benefit of that bounty? Is that the contention of the Colonial Secretary? Some speakers have asked, "How can the English refiner expect to carry on his business with an adverse bounty of 4s. or 5s. against him?" He could not keep his factory doors open a week if that were the case. The thing is too ridiculous. I maintain that the English refiner enjoys to the fullest possible extent the advantage of the bounty. As regards the West Indies, they produce the raw material, and no doubt bounties would have some effect. But if anybody hopes that the abolition of bounties is going to restore West Indian sugar refiners to a state of prosperity, he will be greatly disappointed. We all desire to see such prosperity restored, but the bounties alone are not the cause of their distress. Until recent years sugar production in the West Indies was a very profitable industry. The old West Indian planters were extremely rich men, and a small share in a West Indian plantation was considered to be a fortune. They extracted sugar from the cane by windmills and all sorts of obsolete machinery. But with competition of beet and the bringing of the process of manufacture up-to-date, the West

Indies dropped behind. They dragged on thinking something would come up to rehabilitate them, but they have gone from bad to worse. They had all the natural advantages in the West Indies.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN, Birmingham, W.): Hear, hear.

MR. KEARLEY: I suppose the right hon. Gentleman, by that ironical cheer, suggests that when the bounties were abolished the West Indies would prove their capacity to compete with the rest of the world. How long will it take for that to happen? Until the West Indies improve their methods, bounty or no bounty, they will never regain their old prosperity. We were invited last November to consider this question from a practical point of view. Let us consider the West Indian aspect of the case from the profit and loss standpoint. What are we to gain or lose by the abolition of bounties? The English refiner is prosperous, and the abolition of the bounty is not required on his behalf. There is some case for the West Indian, I admit. Every 1s. of bounty that we throw overboard represents £1,500,000 a year. Some estimate the amount of the bounty to be 5s., or a total annual value of £8,000,000 a year. I do not know whether that is so or not, but I do say it would be far cheaper for us to give the West Indies a large sum of money every year instead of throwing away all the advantage of these bounties. The abolition of the bounties will be a very bad thing for this country. I cannot conceive what has induced the Government to adopt the course they are pursuing. It cannot be that they desire to see £8,000,000 a year thrown away. I can only conclude that they have not made themselves acquainted with the true facts of the case, and that they are proceeding on faulty information. I oppose the Convention because I contend that we must have regard to British interests at large, which we are not doing by this measure. We have allowed ourselves to be lured into this Convention by a coterie of interested people, and I hope that at all events those who hold that free trade is a good principle will vote against this Bill, which is really the first step towards protection. No arguments have yet been adduced which prove conclusively either that the sugar refiners in this country are entitled to the benefits they will receive under this Bill, or that the passing of the measure will restore the prosperity of the West Indies.

*SIR WALTER THORBURN (Peebles and Selkirk): My hon. friend who has just sat down has spoken mainly of the bounties given on raw sugar, and he has not dealt at all with the large bounty which is given on refined sugar. The amount of bounty given upon refined sugar practically makes it impossible for the trade to be carried on in this country. There is no doubt whatever that for a long period of years the refiners have been unable to carry on their industry in this country because of the unfair competition. London is the centre of a very large population, and the consumption of sugar in the Metropolis is so great that sugar can be distributed at a much less expense than in the case of those who carry on refineries farther away. A refinery in London can get nearly 1s. per cwt. more for the same class of sugar than a refinery in Greenock. Of course it is impossible that all these refineries can be carried on at one centre. Many hon. Members who have addressed the House upon this question are more or less interested in certain trades which are supposed to benefit by these bounties. I intend to make a few remarks on the effect which these bounties have produced upon the sugar industry in Scotland. Prior to the introduction of bounties the refining industry in Greenock was a large and prosperous one. Some years ago there were no less than 16 sugar refineries in Greenock. I do not assert that all of them were in a thorough state of efficiency, but we have at the present moment only six of them left in active operation, and with regard to them I can say that there are no factories better equipped, and they can turn out sugar as cheaply as any other refineries if they have fair competition. For many years past the margin of profit between the raw and the refined sugar has been absolutely *nil*. To my certain knowledge if these refineries had kept their works going simply by buying the raw material and refining it at once, they were bound to lose almost all the expenses of refining. Only those connected with the trade who are well off financially, and who can buy largely when the raw sugar is cheap, can possibly get any advantage, but the ordinary average man who buys the raw material from day to day finds that it is impossible for him to make a profit. The German bounty is 35s. per ton on refined sugar. A general impression exists in this House that this country gets the full advantage of the German bounty, but there is nothing so erroneous. All that the German refiners give off that 35s. is a margin just sufficient to submerge the profit of refining in this country, with the result that it is impossible to carry the trade on here. I ask hon. Members if they happened to be engaged in an industry like this, I ask those interested in the confectionery trade if they were so handicapped, would they sit quietly by and say, "We can do nothing." This state of things is not for the benefit of the country in the long run. Is it for the benefit of the country that all the money which has been sunk in refineries, in machinery, and in stores, should be put down the gutter while the German manufacturers, after having killed the industry in this country, will be able to get what price they choose to ask for their sugar? Is it to the advantage of the country that all the labour which those factories would employ should not be utilised?

In the town of Greenock the Harbour Trust built large stores for the storing of sugar, but since the collapse of the sugar industry these stores have been practically unused. At one time the Harbour Trust bonds were looked after very anxiously by investors, but what is the case to-day? The second bonds, which at one time even trustees would buy in very large quantities, had been so affected by the decline of the sugar trade that the price of the £100 bond was now down to something a little over £30. If hon. Gentlemen think that the extinguishing of this industry is one which is beneficial to the country in order to give a temporary benefit to certain people by these bounties, then I can only say that I take a very different view. The confectionery trade have been very active in this matter, and I do not know how many circulars I have received more or less couched in the most extravagant language. These confectioners have been absolutely coining money.

MR. LOUGH (Islington, N.): You want to stop that, I suppose?

*SIR WALTER THORBURN: No, I do not, but I think they will be very little injured by this measure. For the sake of maintaining these enormous profits the confectioners are using all the resources they possess to induce hon. Members to vote against this Bill. Those people have no competition at all abroad, and if they put their heads together they can get any price they like. No doubt they will take that course. No one can complain of the price of sugar in this country even now or in regard to what it will be under this Convention. I believe that when the bounties are abolished the price of sugar will not appreciably rise. I believe that the price of a good white sugar is from 1¾d. to 2d. per lb., and for brown sugar about 1½d. per lb.; surely moderate enough in all conscience. The expectation of the trade is that this Convention will produce a much steadier range of prices, and that on the whole prices will be decidedly low. I do not know what part of the world my hon. friend referred to as showing an extraordinarily increased quantity of cane sugar. I know that for some years the bulk of sugar produced in the West Indies has gone principally to America. Why? because America countervails all bounty-fed sugar, with the result that better prices can be obtained there than in this country. After the passing of this Act I have no doubt that more West Indian sugar will be grown, and that it will come to this country in larger quantities than for many years past. Hon. Gentlemen opposite are never done speaking for working men in this matter. I happened to meet a number of working men, not all of my way of thinking politically, and I discussed this question with them. I put the whole facts before them at the time when it was proposed to deal with the sugar bounties, and everyone of them, without regard to Party, declared that such a state of matters as that should not be allowed to exist. When the bounties are abolished, at all events you will find that the West Indies will be put on an equal footing with continental growers of beet. Fair competition I do not object to. If we cannot compete with our foreign competitors after the abolition of the bounties, then I will accept the situation, but I protest as strongly as I can that an industry which was carried on and employed a considerable number of people in this country should be killed by unfair competition under a system of bounties. The hon. Member for King's Lynn quoted Messrs. Tate's prospectus, but he omitted to say that the £200,000 he refers to was largely because of the imposition of the four shillings duty that year. I may further explain that Messrs. Tate were protected by patents which enabled them to obtain higher prices. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Aberdeen stated last night that cartels would still exist and the bounties would still be carried on. If that is so, why object to this Bill. We think differently. We believe there is sufficient provision made by the Convention to prevent cartels. If we fail, then I hope there will be a Government in power that will deal with any other system of cartels that happens to arise. I speak feelingly, as one who has suffered, and I can assure the House that the Scotch sugar refiners resent it being stated that the reason for their misfortune is owing to their machinery not being up to date. I fearlessly assert that no sugar works in this country are more efficiently equipped as regards machinery than the six works in Greenock which I have referred to. I cordially support the Second Reading of the Bill.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON (Dundee): The hon. Baronet who has just sat down has put before the House the case of certain industries in Scotland, which he alleges have been injured, if not ruined, by the existing state of things. I want to follow him because I represent a constituency where an exactly opposite condition prevails. But before I say a word from the point of view entertained by them, I wish to say a word on the general aspect of the discussion. An hon. Member who spoke early in the debate expressed some surprise that the opposition on this side of the House to the Bill should be so strenuous as it appears likely to be. The reason of that is not far to seek. It is that we, at all events, rightly or wrongly, regard this debate as the first action between protection and free trade, the first step in the great controversy which seems likely to occupy the attention of the country for some time to come. I cannot help remembering what has occurred this session on a similar occasion when the bread tax was under discussion. The late Chancellor of the Exchequer who imposed the bread tax last year, came forward this year and voted for its abolition because he saw that it might be used in the interest of protection. I hope that hon. Members on the opposite side of the House will be inclined to take the same action with regard to this proposal, and that, although they may have voted last year for the ratification of the Convention, seeing as they must now do, that the Convention is part of a great new system, they will vote against the Bill on this occasion. May I remind the House that this is not a mere case of protection, but protection in its worst form. It is not a case of countervailing duties only; it is a case of absolute prohibition. I am quite sure that all those concerned in the trade, and all those who know the needs of the country, would say that if there was to be any dealing with this bounty system in the country at all, they would prefer that it should take the shape of countervailing duties, bad as they are, rather than the prohibition proposed under the Bill. And it is a prohibition which we are to impose at the dictation of a foreign tribunal manned by the representatives of protectionist States, and avowedly inspired by local protectionist motives. It is to be automatically imposed upon the Government of this country at the behest of that Commission without any regard to the justice of the particular decree the Commission may name. I should like to put it to the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade whether it would not have been better to have given the House of Commons an opportunity of deciding on all these decrees itself. How are we to know whether a particular decree is wise or just. Would it not have been possible to bring forward each case on its own merits and to have voted permission to take action. They are asking for them *en bloc*, without giving any opportunity of considering the evidence on which the Commission acted or discussing the justice of the decisions at which they have arrived. Why not submit each particular case to the House, and do with this as with other and larger questions—consult the people beforehand. It is because we regard this

Bill as part of an insidious and long continued campaign against free trade, which is now beginning to be disclosed, that we oppose it. I hope that in all the future stages of this Bill we shall continue to offer strenuous opposition to the proposal of the Government.

May I say a word about those local interests which have benefited by the system of bounties? I represent a community which has profited largely by the present system, though I am not putting their case as one which should prevent the House, merely in their interest, from taking what may appear to be a right and proper action. The case of the manufacturing confectioners in places like Dundee is exactly the case of the people at large. But I am anxious to put their view, because on former occasions, if not now, their opinion has been misrepresented. Local opinion has been cited in favour of these proposals; but local opinion, so far as I know, is absolutely against them. The President of the Board of Trade quoted the opinion of the head of the great firm of Keillers as being in favour of this proposal. It is true that the late Mr. Keiller, fourteen years ago, expressed an opinion in favour of the proposals of to-day, but I have the authority of his successor to say that the present firm and its head are entirely of the other way of thinking. The case of the Dundee industries is typical. They import sugar from Germany and mix it with their local fruits, and sometimes with foreign fruits, and they make up confections which they send back to Germany, thus selling to the Germans at a profit the very sugar that is imported from them. The belief of the industries concerned is that the price has already risen more than it would otherwise have done in consequence of these proposals, and their belief is that it will rise further still if these proposals are carried out, and that, just as the Greenock refiners have been injured by the present system, so the industries that have been brought into existence under that system will probably be injured, if not ruined, by the alteration now proposed. We set up the case of the people and the case of the manufacturers against that of the West Indies and of the sugar refiners. Bounties are bad, and I do not desire to advocate them, but would prefer to see a bounty given to the West Indies and the refiners rather than have all other sugar driven out of the country. But why are bounties impossible? Because the people would then know exactly what they were paying to the West Indies and the sugar refiners. A proposal to give half a million to the West Indies and the sugar refiners would raise such a storm in the country that no Government would dare to propose it. But the Government are proposing in this indirect way to inflict upon the whole people a burden ten or fifteen times as great. They are thus adding to indirect taxation without giving any corresponding benefit to the people.

There are only one or two other points to which I wish to direct attention. One is the serious question of our handing over, not merely the control of our fiscal arrangements, but the control of the legislation of this House to a foreign tribunal. Let me refer for a moment to the Convention. I do not know whether the House really knows what has been done by Article VII. of the Convention. You set up a Commission whose business it is to supervise the execution of the provisions of the Convention. And how do they propose to supervise it? We have an example of the kind of action they intend to take in the despatch of Sir Henry Bergne, dated 13th July, which said—

> "The duty of the Commission was, first to examine the legislation of the Contracting States, in order to see if they were in conformity with the Convention."

And he gave an account of the proceedings taken by the Commission under this delegation of Powers. For instance, this foreign tribunal, on which we have one single representative, pronounced by a majority that "the legislation of the Netherlands was in harmony with the Convention"; and they presumed also to sit in judgment on this country. The report of our delegate said—

> "Great Britain and Belgium had not yet passed their laws, and it was, therefore, not easy for the Commission to express decided opinions. I submitted our existing law and our Bill, saying, however, that the latter might be altered in Parliament. A few easily answered questions were asked, but no objections were made. A cursory examination of the Belgian Bill was made in the same way. No objection was found to it. It may be

> added that it was recognised that all these decisions were not definitive in character, but were subject to revision at future meetings of the Commission, if occasion should arise."

That meant that our Bill may not, in the end, satisfy the Commission, and that they asserted the right to sit in judgment upon it subsequently. We have no assurance that the Bill, if passed in its present form, will satisfy this Commission. I am satisfied that this Bill, on many points, will not be in harmony with their opinions. What I want to impress on the House is that we are, first of all, legislating by direction of a foreign tribunal; and, second, that we have not got its final direction; but that, even if we pass the Bill, the result may be that this Commission may have another meeting to examine it again, and may direct the British Government to bring in an amending Bill, and compel the Government to come down to the House of Commons and say that they had an international obligation to carry out the wishes of the Commission. I do not think that is a position to which the House of Commons ought to reduce itself. It is not merely giving away our power over our fiscal arrangements, but it is surrendering our Imperial right of legislation. So far as the Crown colonies, some of which manufacture sugar, are concerned, this foreign Commission is to have the right and duty of supervising their fiscal system as regards sugar, and the Imperial Government must see that these sugar colonies obey the dictates of the Commission. What is the position of the South African colonies? I understand that they are, under the Convention, clearly non-signatory States, and if so they fall under the declaration made by the Convention as to such non-signatory States. The question has been raised that if they give bounties on sugar produced in their territory, we would be compelled to exclude their sugar from this country. It is quite true that the noble Lord the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs has, on behalf of the Government, repudiated that obligation. But how? He told us that he had informed the foreign Governments that we should under no circumstances consent to penalise the sugar from our self-governing colonies. But that does not settle the question — right or wrong— under the Convention. The German, Austrian, and French Governments do not accept that view.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Lord CRANBORNE, Rochester): Our consent to the Convention was only given subject to that condition.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: But the effect is that it is disputed by certain members of the Convention, and not admitted by a good many more; and the only answer that we can give is that we deposited our ratification of the Convention on the understanding that we were not to be held liable to exclude the sugar from our bounty-giving self-governing colonies.

LORD CRANBORNE: Subject to conditions.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: Then this was a conditional ratification. I do not understand a conditional ratification. Has this condition been accepted formally by the plenipotentiaries at the Convention? I understood that when a treaty has been made between eight or ten Powers, if the ratification is not absolute, it is no ratification at all. It comes to this, that we are asked to-day to sanction the execution of an international Convention, the meaning of which is disputed by one of the most important parties to it, and as to which the Government of the day has given no real ratification. I think that point ought to have been cleared up before the Bill founded on the Convention was brought before the House. I am sorry that this business has been left in the position it has been by the Government. There is a very serious question of the same sort, or of a similar kind with regard to the most favoured-nation clause. The point has been raised that the treaty as sanctioned, or, at all events, the legislation founded on the treaty, will be in conflict with the most-favoured-nation clause in treaties with foreign countries. Our Government does not admit this; Russia is of a contrary opinion. I have read the correspondence, and I think Russia sets up a very serious case. I do not think that it is a satisfactory answer to say:—"If you do not like it, we are prepared to denounce the treaty with

Russia." The policy which begins with a readiness to denounce commercial treaties is a policy which ought to be proceeded with very slowly. I do not argue the question as between Russia and this country; but I do not support the attitude of the Government in refusing to make this question of the meaning of the most-favoured-nation clause the subject of arbitration. That is not a satisfactory way in which a great foreign nation should be treated. That is one of the most serious objections I entertain, not only to the Convention itself, but to the Bill founded on the Convention. I put it to the noble Lord whether he can tell us if, under such a clause, in such a treaty as we have with Russia, any single State has even claimed a right of discriminating between modes of production and modes of protection. If he has a precedent of that kind I hope he will produce it. My point is that the Convention cannot give you any greater right to set aside the most-favoured-nation clause than you would have independent of the Convention. This Bill is merely in its preliminary stage to-day, and I hope there will be a full discussion on it in Committee. The great objection to it is that it is again doing what was done last session in what was called "broadening the basis of taxation." It is part of the same policy. You are increasing the burden of taxation on the poorest of the poor in the most objectionable of all forms, because you are not adding with that burden on the poorest of the poor a single penny to the Treasury revenue.

*MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL (Oldham): I have listened with the closest attention to this debate so far as it has at present proceeded, and a reflection has been borne in upon me by it which I desire to submit to the House. It was always found in the past to be a misfortune to a country when it was governed from one particular point of view, or in the interests of any particular class, whether it was the Court, or the Church, or the Army, or the mercantile or labouring classes. Every country ought to be governed from some central point of view, where all classes and all interests are proportionately represented; and I venture to think that even in modern days that principle to some extent applies to our Government, and that there will always be ground of complaint against the Government and friction and distorted and disproportionate acts of legislation, when any one particular Department has too much to say to the making of policy. I consider that the Colonial Office has had far too much to say in our policy during the last four or five years. I think that the country ought to be governed by the Prime Minister. If the Prime Minister associates himself in particular with any one of his colleagues, that colleague ought to be the Chancellor of the Exchequer, because the Treasury is, after all, in a certain sense a central point of view. When the Prime Minister and the Chancellor of the Exchequer are closely associated, when there is an intimate sympathetic understanding between them, their views must prevail in nearly every case upon the rest of their colleagues in the Cabinet, and the course of public business will be smooth and satisfactory. But if the Prime Minister should fall under the influence of one of the spending or administrative Departments, if he should unduly allow himself to be swayed in his policy by the influence of a Minister of one of these Departments; worst of all, if he should hand over some part of his supreme authority to such a Minister, then I say there will be friction and disturbance in the Cabinet, and distorted and disproportionate acts of legislation like the Bill we are now considering.

I am quite aware that this is a subject upon which free traders take different views; and it is quite natural that they should. The economic arguments for or against the Sugar Convention do not lie by any means on one side; and in theory, at any rate, they may be said to be almost equally divided. The abolition of bounties as a general object is one which all free traders ought to desire, or, at least, to acquiesce in, whatever views they may entertain about the method by which that abolition is obtained. Another point occurs to me. I have heard it said that this Convention will confer great benefit on the foreigner and great injury on our own people. I believe that is perfectly true. So far as the injury to our own people is concerned, I deplore it; as to the benefit to the foreigner, that is not a matter which should accentuate hostility of free traders to this Convention, for we believe that in commerce the good of any is the good of all. I quite understand that there are on this side of the House a great many hon. Gentlemen whose fiscal orthodoxy is unquestionable, who will go into the Lobby to-night to support this Convention, and who will not think themselves in the least compromised as regards the far graver issues which have lately been raised. After all, when this Convention was first introduced we stood in a different position. They gave their support to the Government then, and when support is given to a Government for one special particular act of policy, it ought not to be withdrawn except for very strong reasons indeed. Therefore, I would observe that the division to-night is not a division which can in any sense be said to represent free trade opinion on the main issues which are before us; and although I do not doubt that the associates of the right hon. Gentleman (the Colonial Secretary) will not hesitate to make what capital they can out of the division, I feel sure that the right hon. Gentleman himself is too clever to let it seriously influence his calculations. Nevertheless, I would submit to the House, and to those hon. Gentlemen who are going to vote for this Convention to-night, and who are staunch and true free traders, that the case has been very much altered since we were first confronted with this Convention. Then it stood alone. It was an isolated act of policy to meet a special case of admittedly peculiar hardship. Then the great principles of free trade under which we had so long proceeded were unchallenged, and not only unchallenged but were actually extolled, applauded and employed by the very authors of this Bill. The right hon. Gentleman, speaking in support of this Bill last year, said he spoke as a convinced free trader.

Do principles change with dates? When this Convention was first brought to our notice we must remember that the rise in sugar which is contemplated, and which it is designed to effect, might be considered apart from any plan or proposal for increasing the cost of food generally in this country. Now all these things are changed. Now we are told that this Convention is a sample, a specimen, of what we are going to have when the right hon. Gentleman has got his mandate, and when the new regime begins to add to the prosperity of the country. Now there is a very deliberate and insidious attack on all those principles of free trade which many of us on both sides of the House regard with veneration and confidence. Thirdly, the increase in the price of sugar, which this Bill proposes, is no longer an isolated act, but part of a general scheme for raising the cost of articles of consumption in this country, in the real or supposed interests of individuals or industries in the colonies. The noble Marquess who has the Foreign Office in charge said in another place about three weeks ago:—

> "And with regard to the question of retaliation I cannot help hoping that just as we have hardened our hearts in the case of sugar, so we may find it possible to deal in a similar spirit with similar aggression in respect of other kinds of industries and manufactures."

This Bill, therefore, if I understand it rightly, is a working model submitted to us for inspection before we lay down plant on a large scale. I do not desire to pay any compliment to the right hon. Gentleman, but I am bound to say that if that is the intention of the measure it is a very perfect working model indeed. There is hardly a feature which the greater scheme contains which is not shown on a small and convenient scale in this Sugar Convention Bill. I notice, in the first place, the same avoidance of debate. This measure was passed last session at a single sitting, which was terminated by the closure. It is brought in this session very late, when many hon. Gentlemen have to be away from the House, and when naturally interest in political affairs is not so keen as it would be at an earlier and cooler period of the session. There is the same inconsistency in this measure as in the greater scheme. The corn tax was abolished just before we were to be told that a tax on corn is vital to the continuance of the Empire. There is the same inconsistency shown in Clause 11 of this measure that we are actually prevented from making, in respect of sugar, that preferential arrangement with our colonies which the right hon. Gentleman says is necessary if we are to remain an Empire, or indeed a nation. There is the same disingenuous use of free trade arguments, the same interference with trade, the same odd mixture of sentiment and business, and the same astonishing exaggeration of colonial as against British interests. There are, moreover, one or two very instructive points to be noticed. We have a fine, full-fledged, substantial specimen of "dumping" in full working order. All the nations of Europe are combining "to dump," and we find it very profitable. We are to have retaliation, such as a great Imperial statesman, if he obtain *carte blanche* from the electorate, would apply, and it is found that this retaliation is unnecessary, wasteful, futile, and inconvenient. Lastly, we have one thing very certain, whatever else may be uncertain, whatever else may be arguable, and whatever else may be proved or not proved—we have in this, as in the greater scheme, the certainty of dearer food. We have dearer food, not as a statement in a leaflet, not as a Parliamentary device of the Opposition, not merely as a menace for the future, but as an accomplished fact, avowed and admitted, and which is vaunted as the achievement of the legislation we are now asked to pass. I would ask the House to remember that we have to consider this Sugar Convention in a new light. We have to consider the proposal to increase the price of sugar—for that is what the Convention practically does, as far as we are concerned — in conjunction with the Colonial Secretary's proposal to put a considerable tax on corn, and with his plan of putting a tax on meat, including bacon. We have to consider the proposal to increase the price of sugar in conjunction with the right hon. Gentleman's plan of putting a tax on butter, cheese, and eggs. The right hon. Gentleman will contradict me if I am wrong.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN (Birmingham, W.): No, Sir; I cannot contradict the hon. Gentleman.

*MR WINSTON CHURCHILL: The House will doubtless appreciate the extreme reluctance of the right hon. Gentleman to give any information on this subject. Lastly, we have to consider the proposal to increase the cost of sugar in conjunction with the proposal to increase the cost of fruit. Under these circumstances, I think that hon. Gentlemen, even those who, on free trade grounds, support this measure, are justified in pausing before they finally commit themselves by voting for it, while those of us who have opposed the Bill from the beginning—and I may claim to have been one of the first to protest against it—find ourselves fortified in our hostility by the facts I have mentioned. Let me look a little more in detail at some of the features of this smaller scheme which are also apparent on a larger scale in the greater scheme of the right hon. Gentleman. What is the position to which the bounty-giving nations have reduced themselves by the policy of bounties? I do not take the view that they are poor ignorant foreigners, unable to appreciate the simplest economic truths which any schoolboy is able to learn. These things are not so simple as that.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: Hear, hear.

*MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL: I think the right hon. Gentleman will admit that the case for fair trade is sufficiently delusive to be of considerable use when it comes to an electioneering campaign. We are ourselves learning the temptations to which the minds of quite clever people are exposed by the arguments of fair trade and protection when they are put forward, as they were last night, by a very skilful politician. But we are not in the position that foreign nations were in when they embarked on the bounty system. It is very easy to embark on that policy, but it is very hard to stop, and still harder to repair the consequences which that policy entails. We have not merely to balance economic arguments one against the other; we can see the results of the policy itself. We have the experience of these other countries before us, and we shall have only ourselves to blame if we are led into the same disasters and the same confusion. What is the experience of all the European nations who have adopted the bounty system? They have reduced themselves to an astonishing position. Vast industries of poor people, artificially stimulated, exerting considerable political power, and using that political power to maintain and even increase that artificial stimulation; giant trusts enjoying a complete monopoly of the home market, making enormous profits out of the home consumer, and no doubt using the wealth thus obtained still further to influence the Government machinery. As the result of this state of things over-production on a prodigious scale; cut-throat competition between the trusts for the free English market; enormous exportations at unprofitable prices, and encouragement by the Government of this enormous unprofitable exportation, which increases year by year at an astonishing rate. As the result, again, of this, a score of trades in these countries are hampered by dear sugar, and many industries are driven out of the country; the bounty-giving Governments are confronted with deficits and financial embarrassment, and sugar is 7d. a pound to the population of the country in which the sugar is grown. And all this time free trade England, anchored by irrefragable logic to economic truth, rides out the gale—indolent, prosperous, triumphant. What an object-lesson! They would indeed have been poor ignorant foreigners if they had not made a great effort to repair the misfortunes which have come upon them through the policy they had adopted. It is to their conviction that this bounty system had got out of hand and was injuring them in an extraordinary manner, and to their belief that they must do something to put a stop to it, and not to the diplomacy of Lord Lansdowne, or the supplications of the West Indies, or even the prestige of the Colonial Secretary, that the Sugar Convention we are now considering is due.

I would ask to be allowed to consider a little more in detail the great advantages which accrue to England, not through any merit of our own, but through the adoption of this bounty policy by European States. I am told on very good authority that, merely looking at the difference between the price of sugar with the bounty and the price as it would have been without the bounty, the gain to this country is £5,000,000 a year. But that does not by any means represent the total advantages. We have to add to that the economies in the cost of production which this extraordinary, and, to some extent, unhealthy competition has produced. Those economies have amounted in many cases, in regard not only to beet, but also to cane sugar, to 50 per cent. of total cost. The sum of these two advantages may be variously estimated at from £6,000,000 to £7,000,000 a year. What are the consequences of all this? I think it was Burke who said of the French Revolutionists, that they forgot that every set of circumstances involved every other set of circumstances. So it is with the fair traders. They watch the river flowing to the sea, and they wonder how long it will be before the land is parched and drained of all its water. They do not observe the fertilising showers by which in the marvellous economy of nature the water is restored to the land. Sugar is cheaper in England than anywhere else. What does that mean to our crowded populations? First of all it means that the masses of our people eat more sugar, and are comforted and strengthened thereby. Does the right hon. Gentleman think that important? [Mr. CHAMBERLAIN made no reply.] The right hon. Gentleman does not think that important! I think it very important, and I know a lot of people outside this House who think it very important too. Next, because they spend less upon their sugar they have more to spend on other things. See what a real refreshment this is to that great home market of which we hear so little from the right hon. Gentleman that one might almost think he did not know it existed. It is very difficult to trace further the consequences of these two great advantages which we have enjoyed; their further consequences are real, large, important, and valuable, but intangible. There is, however, a third set of advantages which are enjoyed as the result of cheap sugar and which we can trace a little further. Upon the basis of this cheap sugar, precarious and unnatural as it was to some extent, which we obtained, not by breaking, but by rigidly adhering to economic law, there grew up a various and imposing array of secondary industries. The hon. Member who yesterday moved the rejection of the Bill, in a speech which I venture to think was heard not without pleasure even in quarters where it did not excite agreement, read a long list of the industries which had grown up as a result of cheap sugar. We make jam and biscuits for the world; we make soda-water, and all kinds of sweets; even French chocolate is made in London. And in spite of the greedy consumption of the home market—for the home consumers clustered like a swarm of bees round these good things—our export trade in these commodities steadily increased. I was reading only on Monday an article in *The Times* by that writer whose articles are so interesting and amusing, and who, though he is plainly a very wasteful person, signs himself "Economist," and I observed a quotation from the Statistical Abstract showing that the export trade in confectionery is increasing to a very considerable extent. Then, Sir, sugar attracts fruit. The union between sugar and fruit is natural, pleasant, profitable, and prolific. I wonder that my right hon. friend the Member for the Sleaford Division, who all his life has been on the watch for anything that could help or benefit the agriculturist, has not attacked the right hon. Gentleman for reducing the cheapness of sugar which has no doubt reacted on the demand for fruit in the English market. Furthermore we must remember that all these articles require other commodities to wait on them. Bottles have to be made to hold the soda-water, pots for the jam, jars for the pickles and preserved fruits, labels for all, and corks, stoppers, and boxes. Special and complicated machinery had to be set up. I am told that at the Glasgow Exhibition there was a corridor or large gallery entirely occupied with the special kinds of machinery used in the making of jams, biscuits, and so forth, the construction of which has been made a great and growing industry in England by the stimulus afforded by cheap sugar. I do not say that the withdrawal of the bounties would kill these industries. That would be attempting to prove too much. But in so far as you succeed in raising the price of sugar—and you have already succeeded to some extent — you will injure all these industries, and they know it well. The Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade told us that the sugar refiners had been ruined. That is not quite true. No doubt they have suffered, but, as has been pointed out, they now produce more than they produced before. I see that there are now employed 2,416 persons in the refining business, as against 3,733 in 1891. Although there has been a decline, which I do not want in any way to minimise, it is not arguable that that decline can be set against the great and vigorous new trades which have sprung up.

I have a theory which I should very much like to have examined by competent persons. I will make a present of it to the Prime Minister, who is almost the only person in the country, not grossly ignorant of the whole subject, who has an open mind, and perhaps he will have it tested. Old countries in which there are no new discoveries—of mines, mineral oil, or water power—must look not so much to their basic industries for the development and expansion of their trade as to the more complicated and secondary processes of manufacture. As their primary industries are brought more and more into competition with the resources of new countries, possessing perhaps greater natural facilities, it will undoubtedly be necessary for the older countries gradually to move on to the more complicated and secondary processes of manufacture, and in the higher grades of manufacture to obtain the expansion of their trade which they need. I have heard it said that in the evolution of the steel and iron trade something of that process is to be traced. We export less in weight, but more in value. I think there is something bearing on that point in this sugar story also. So far as it is effective, I think we ought to contemplate that evolution and the transference of our people from being, as it were, hewers of wood and drawers of water to the more elaborate processes of manufacture with unmixed satisfaction. But if we are to find that outlet for our strength, energy and skill, it will be only by utilising our resources of capital, which old countries have accumulated, in the provision of better education, the best machinery, and the highest scientific knowledge. It is only by those means, and under the influence of open competition and free enterprise, that we may succeed in finding the outlets we so seriously need.

At this stage in the story it is right to consider the action of the Colonial Secretary.

MR. CHAMBERLAIN: You have been considering nothing else.

MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL: The right hon. Gentleman occupies such a very large arena. The West Indies are under the Colonial Office; the West Indies were suffering; the West Indies had to be relieved. Parliament had shown its disinclination to continue the policy of subsidies;

consequently we were hurried into this Convention. Now either this Convention will raise prices or it will not. If it raises prices the English consumer pays; if it does not raise prices the colonial producer does not gain. The Convention has, in fact, raised prices by about £2 per ton. Have the objects of the Convention, therefore, been achieved? It is not enough merely to raise prices, but to raise them sufficiently to let in West Indian sugar. In order that the West Indies should benefit effectually, it is necessary that the British consumer should suffer substantially. But that is not all. There is no parity between the loss and gain. It cannot even be argued that what we take out of the pockets of one class of British subjects we put into the pockets of another class. Even assuming that the whole of the present output of West Indian sugar is taken by this country as a result of this Convention, we shall still have to buy from foreign countries six times as much as we get from the West Indies. For the purposes of the argument it does not matter by how much sugar is going to rise. But the President of the Board of Trade knows all about the future rise in price. If he is such a good prophet, I wish he would tell us when the general election is going to be, and what the result is going to be. I will not emulate the right hon. Gentleman's prophetic power. For every 1s. per cwt. that sugar goes up it is self-evident that we pay 1s. more for what we buy. The West Indian producer gets 1s. more for what he sells, and as we buy six times as much sugar from foreign countries as from the West Indies, we lose 6s. for every 1s. the West Indian gains. That is a very interesting calculation, because it enables us to measure the relative importance which the Colonial Secretary attaches to a British subject resident in the colonies under the authority and protection of the Colonial Office and one of the ordinary subjects of the King. In the opinion of the right hon. Gentleman, a British loss of 6s. is compensated for by a colonial gain of 1s. That, again, accords well with the general conception of this larger scheme. But it does not stop there. It is certain that we shall lose, but it is not certain that the West Indies will gain. We lose immediately; the West Indies may not gain for a great many years. Therefore it is not an exaggeration to say that the actual opinion of the right hon. Gentleman tested mathematically as to the relative importance of persons under the care of the Colonial Office and persons outside the authority of that Department, is that a certain and immediate loss of 6s. to the British public is compensated for by the remote possibility of a gain of 1s. to the West Indies. We are to lose. There is no doubt about that. Even if this Convention would save the West Indies I would not support it. I think there are cheaper ways of helping them. But will it save the West Indian sugar industry? The real market of the West Indies, I am informed by those who have carefully studied the subject, is not to be found in Europe. The West Indies export 260,000 tons of sugar per annum, of which 200,000 tons go to America, and only 60,000 tons to the rest of the world. In regard to the export to America, they are greatly aided by countervailing duties. The United States have now acquired Cuba, and that, with the growth of the beet industry in the United States, is going to make them, as regards sugar, nearly as self-supporting as the right hon. Gentleman would like this Empire to be. In four or five years, therefore, the American market will probably be closed to the West Indies. What follows? They will have to find a market over here not for 60,000 tons, but for 260,000 tons, and that sugar have to come into competition with the will product of Europe. Although sugar will undoubtedly rise under this Convention, there is great probability that it will not rise sufficiently to benefit the West Indies. I will give the House five reasons for that. The stocks of sugar are enormous. The harvest last year was the best on record. European consumption will naturally grow slowly. European production, when the bounties are withdrawn, will naturally dwindle slowly. Lastly, the rise in price will stimulate competition from Java and India. The result may easily be that we shall suffer this loss through the rise in sugar without conferring those benefits on the West Indies which everyone in this House would gladly see conferred. We shall not save the West Indian industry; we shall only prolong its dying agony; and by impoverishing ourselves we shall weaken our power to help the West Indies in the hour of their need as charity may suggest and policy dictate. Under these circumstances, I shall have the greatest satisfaction in recording, consistently with my former action, my vote against the Second Reading of this Bill.

*MR. AUSTIN TAYLOR (Liverpool, East Toxteth): The hon. Member for Oldham has pointed out that we do not stand exactly where we did when this Convention was first introduced. I think that is perfectly true. We do not know exactly where we do stand. But as far as I understand the scheme of the Colonial Secretary—and I confess I do not understand it in all its completeness—there are aspects of it which do not in any way commend themselves to me. The hon. Member for Oldham bids us examine the Bill before the House as a working model of the larger scheme which the right hon. Gentleman is to propound. On that I will make only this observation. If this Convention is a true sample of the bulk of the larger scheme, our fears will be very largely diminished. I desire to distinguish between the objective or principle of this Bill and the machinery by which effect is to be given to it. I remember an interesting occasion in this House when the hon. and learned Gentleman the Attorney-General attempted to distinguish between theology and the machinery by which you give effect to theology, and he received a very severe rebuke from my noble friend below the gangway for distinguishing between doctrines of religion and the machinery by which they are propagated. We are not now dealing with theology, but with an economic subject, and although one hears the phrase orthodoxy and heterodoxy in connection with this matter, it is from persons whom no one would ever suspect of being theologians. What is the declared objective of this Convention? It is the removal of the inequality of competition between the different kinds of sugar and the increased consumption of sugar. I think those are objects which must commend themselves to every free trader. The evil which it is desired to remove by this Convention is the artificial stimulation of a particular commodity in given countries by the settled policy of the State in giving bounties to the producer, which has created an unfair competition. That, Mr. Speaker, is the evil which this Convention is designed to remove, and it is a course, I think, which may fairly be taken by free traders to remedy the state of things which exists in Central Europe. In this connection, may I point out that what it is desired to alter is an unfair and illegitimate and artificial system by which a bounty-fed product has driven out, or at any rate has retarded, the development of another product which relies wholly or mainly upon the natural law of supply and demand. The hon. Member for Devonport, in a most able speech, called attention to the relative position of beet and cane sugar, and seemed to argue that cane sugar had not suffered in the way some hon. Members of this House had suggested. I hold in my hand some interesting figures on this point, which show that between 1892 and 1902 the development of beet sugar, under the steady influence of a system of State bounties and cartels, had risen from 3,420,000 tons to 5,850,000 tons; and that during the same period the other kind of sugar which rely mainly upon natural circumstances, and owe nothing to State assistance, had only varied to this extent—that in 1893 the production was 3,510,000 tons, and in 1902-3 it had only reached 3,940,000 tons, which practically may be taken as a stationary position. I do not think it can be denied that that is not a satisfactory position for this country to contemplate. When hon. Members speak of the effect of bounties, it is impossible for them to judge them by their effect in one or two years, and during our debates upon this question the cumulative effect of bounties, steadily pursued for a course of years, has been somewhat ignored. I think the figures I have given to the House fairly show that these bounties have artificially stimulated the one kind of sugar, and in that way the effect has been to depress and retard the development of the more natural and, if I may say so, the more nutritious kind of the article.

A great deal has been said about the possible results of this Convention. I do not intend, in regard to the question of price, to enter the schools of the prophets. I think it is perfectly impossible to predict either the exact price or the average price which will rule in the future as regards such an article as sugar. But I think it cannot be for a moment denied that the general tendency after the removal of these bounties will be for the price of sugar to advance. I know there are some hon. Members of this House who persuade themselves that all these matters are the concern of the foreigner. They imagine that if a duty is imposed upon an article it is always in some mysterious way borne by the foreigner, who takes the convenient form of a United States railway which reduces its carriage in order to countervail the effect of the duty. I cannot really follow such a mysterious doctrine as that. If you impose a duty, the result is in the main to increase the price of the article to the consumer: and in the same way, if you have an artificial cheapness due to the giving of a bounty in the producing country, the removal of that bounty will have exactly the same effect, and will raise the price of the article. I am not going for a moment to deny that I think the general result of the abolition of these bounties will be a tendency to raise prices. I followed carefully the hon. Member for Oldham in his description of the advantages which this country has derived from the cheap sugar supplied by Central Europe. I do not think it is possible or desirable to minimise those advantages; we must face them, and the only valid argument which I think will be found in the long run to hold water, as justifying us in voting for this Convention as free traders, is that by so doing we are attacking and condemning the vicious principle of State interference with trade, and the artificial cheapening or enhancing of values by State interference. That is the principle which is attacked by this Convention, and it is therefore with a clear conscience, or almost a clear conscience, that as a free trader I vote for this Bill.

I am aware that the West Indies have to be considered in this matter. I followed the hon. Member for Devonport in his remarks, when he stated that the refining industry of this country had not suffered very much from these bounties. I think he must admit that there has been a great dislocation of trade, and I cannot conceive that it has been altogether for the benefit of the refiners of this country that they have had to scrap a great deal of their machinery, and transfer or close their works altogether. They have also had to adapt their machinery to this particular kind of beet sugar in such a manner that they are not prepared to deal now with cane sugar at all. That is a point which appears to have escaped the hon. Member for Devonport. That is a point which emphasises the artificial position as regards this country, which I do not think is a safe one, because it places us more or less at the mercy of State bounties adopted by France, Germany, and Austria, and which I think, as free traders, we are justified in getting rid of, if we can do so upon the merits of the case. I am not, however, prepared to rest the case upon the West Indies, which supply only 2½ per cent. of our total imports of sugar. But while I do not desire to ignore them as a factor, I do not think it is possible to justify this Convention upon the case of the West Indies alone. I do not desire to get into the habit, which I think would be deplorable, of weighing the colonies against the mother country. In this case, were I to do so, I am not sure the scales would not go against the West Indies. That is the last thing I wish to do. I wish to see the British Empire knit together by bonds light as air, but durable as steel, and it should not be driven to rest itself for unity upon a series of huckstering bargains between its component parts, in which the gain of each would be regarded as the loss of another. While I take that point of view, I must fall back upon the larger and wider view which has been tacitly adopted and affirmed by the high contracting parties to this Convention, namely, that these bounties have produced a false economic position, that they are burdensome to the countries that have given them, and who now desire to be released from them; that we feel that the principle is vicious, and that the position in which we are placed is not satisfactory; and that, weighing the whole thing up upon a balance, we are prepared to adopt the principle of this Convention.

Then, Sir, may I say a word or two about the machinery? I think that such steps as the abolition of the bounties and the rigorous limitation of the surtax are distinctly in the right direction. The hon. Member who spoke from the opposite benches called attention to this fact, that in some way a new system of bounties by means of the surtax was set up by this Convention. I think these surtaxes have always existed in these producing countries, or at any rate have existed for a very long time, and that they have been the basis upon which these cartels and trusts have flourished, which have been instrumental in producing this artificial state of affairs. Therefore the abolition of the bounties, from a free trade point of view, must be welcomed as a pure gain That is also a distinctly free trade position. The further position that no preferential terms are to be given, either by this country or by the Netherlands, to their colonies is surely one more concession to the principle of free trade. I freely admit what we are going to get under the Convention is not absolute free trade in sugar. It is only an approximation to free trade in sugar. It is perfectly true that protective duties remain in the countries that now have them, though they are, under this Convention, to be strictly limited, regulated, supervised, and confined to what those countries think their legitimate object—the protection of their native industry. Therefore it is open to the opponents of this Convention to say that we are conniving to a certain extent at a vicious violation of free trade principles by allowing our delegates to administer or supervise the protective machinery of those European countries. I understand that possibly in the minds of hon. Gentlemen opposite there is some fear that our delegates may be contaminated in their free trade principles by having to supervise this protective machinery. Well, there is a very easy remedy. Those delegates have been appointed, but I suppose they can be changed. There are plenty of gentlemen, even hon. Members of this House, who are so far inoculated already with protectionist principles, who could be trusted to go into this bad company and take no harm whatever. I am not sure but that if the Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade—though I am sure we could not afford to lose him from this House—went on the Commission, so far from taking any harm he might give them a wrinkle or two in the matter of protective machinery which it is some part of the work of the Commission to supervise. But this concession, if it be a concession, to protective principles, will not, I hope, be too severely condemned. Even Naaman was not condemned by Elijah for occasionally bowing in the House of Rimmon, even after his flesh had come again to him as a little child, and I do not find it recorded of Elijah that he had any attack of leprosy for saying to him, after hearing his confession of weakness, "Go in Peace." Therefore I hope we may as free traders on this side of the House be forgiven if we are satisfied with a fairly complete approach on the part of those European Powers to free trade principles, if we cherish hopes of their final conversion, and if we, because we cannot free them at once from chains of protective bondage, yet do not refuse to extend to them a helping hand upon the path upon which, I take it, they are now entering.

The hon. Member for Oldham referred to this Convention as a dangerous precedent, and as simply a sample of what might be further expected. If any future measures are taken by this country to meet bounty-fed competition, and the same conditions are insisted on that exist in this Convention, I do not think we shall have much to fear. You have general consent not to the indiscriminate retaliation of one autonomous fiscal unit against another, but a general consent of most, if not all, of the principal nations of Europe to retaliate, and to retaliate only in cases of specific offence on the part of the nation giving bounties upon sugar. A strict adherence to this principle will make the punishment fit the crime, by making the amount of countervailing duty equivalent exactly to the bounty conferred, with a provision, of course, that the countervailing duty will cease with the cessation on the bounty given by the producing country. I think that all these are satisfactory features, and that on the whole, although this Convention has its doubtful and weak points, it is a sufficient vindication and justification of the principles of free trade to enable us who are free traders on this side of the House to vote for it with a certain amount of goodwill. Though the political position has certainly changed since this Convention was first introduced, may I say that I have been strongly fortified in my adherence to it by the speeches of the right hon. Gentleman the Colonial Secretary. I do not refer to his recent speeches, although, of course, they have made an impression on my mind, nor do I refer to those earlier speeches of, say, twenty years ago, which are now for some mysterious reason being circulated so widely throughout the country. I refer to his comparatively recent speech on the 24th November last year, in which he justified this Convention upon absolute free trade principles. On that occasion the Colonial Secretary said:—

> "The hon. Member for South Shields, I think, triumphantly appealed to what he says is the fact that since the adoption of a protectionist policy by foreign countries their trade has fallen off proportionately to ours. Well, Sir, as a convinced free trader, I listened to that argument really with some alarm. Because, if free trade is to stand upon such a foundation as that—upon that assumption that protection has reduced proportionately the trade of foreign countries in comparison with our own—we have indeed to look forward to a bad time for free trade, because the absolute reverse is the case. As a matter of fact, since the establishment and since the increase of this protectionist policy, we have found the trade in the United States, which is the most protectionist of all nations, and the trade of Germany, which comes very near at its heels—we have found that trade increasing with giant strides, and we have found it increasing in very much larger proportion than our own. I have always thought that there was an answer to that from a free trade point of view. We must attribute this enormous expansion of trade to other circumstances, without detracting from the principle of free trade. What was the doctrine of free trade? It was not founded merely on commercial expediency or on questions of temporary loss or gain, but on the endeavour to establish as a principle that everything should be done to secure the natural course of production and exchange. Mr. Cobden said something to this effect—I do not know that I am using his exact words—that, 'What we (meaning the free traders) want is that every source of supply should be open to us as Nature and Nature's God intended it should be, and without artificial hindrance.' But this Convention, on the face of it, at any rate, is surely intended to secure this equality, and to secure the natural course of trade. Our object is to secure the natural course of production and exchange."

That line of argument and justification by the Colonial Secretary of this Convention amounts to this, that it is a defensive operation against the artificial deflection of trade from its natural sources by the intervention of States; and that seems to me the most emphatic condemnation imaginable of any attempt to apply the same principle either to this country or to the British Empire at large. I will take a hypothetical case and assume that some Minister of the Crown were to step forward and suggest that our colonies, or some part of the British Empire, was to be given a bounty—for that is what it comes to—in the shape of a preference in the largest consuming market in the world—the market of this country—and to propose that particular parts of the British Empire should be artificially stimulated to produce certain food-stuffs, just as central Europe was stimulated to produce beet. I should place that proposal exactly on all fours with the policy of Germany, Austria, and France, which in another way, but with exactly the same object, has stimulated the artificial supply of beet sugar in those countries. I do not want to insist too much upon the argument, but it appears to me that those on this side of the House who are going to vote in favour of this Convention are voting in condemnation of the artificial deflection of industry, and in condemnation, as the Colonial Secretary himself put it, of any interference with the natural course of trade. If a Minister should ever come forward with such a proposal I should rely on the Colonial Secretary of November last year, as the champion of the principle of non-interference with the natural course of free trade, to be foremost in the application of the principle to the British Empire. This is a line of argument which I think amply justifies those of us who are free traders on this side of the House in voting for this Convention. I admit that it is not a perfect measure, but it is possibly the best that could have been done in all the circumstances. It is at any rate an attempt to deal with a principle which is vicious and which leads to artificial results. I hope it may be successful, but, in any case, the vote we shall give to-night in its favour will be to retard, if not to shatter, any movement for applying this radically vicious principle to the Empire of which we are so proud.

* MR. LEVY (Leicestershire, Loughborough): I think I have never heard professed free traders put forth the theory that to close our ports is the best method of expressing their opinions

as free traders. And yet, practically, that is what the last speaker has done. I always thought that free trade was to open our ports and to take all the goods we required which other nations would send us at the lowest possible price. The right hon. Gentleman the President of the Board of Trade, in introducing this Bill, said we were compelled to pass it, otherwise it would be a breach of faith on our part as a nation. I am not quite sure of that, as under Article XII. the "constitutional laws of each of the contracting parties" must be adhered to; and it is specifically provided that if we or any other nation should not confirm the ratification of the Convention, it is possible for the other nations to continue or secede from it—thus making it clear that we are not irrevocably bound to this Convention. I go farther, and ask: Is it better to break faith with foreign nations or to break faith with the people of this country, and, by a side issue, alter the whole fiscal policy of this country? For this is undoubtedly the first step in the Colonial Secretary's scheme towards the abolition of free trade in Great Britain. Still further, is not this Bill intended to put an increase on the cost of the food of the people of this country, possibly to the amount of £8,000,000 or £10,000,000 per annum? The right hon. the President of the Board of Trade said that the price of sugar would not average in the future more than 10s. a cwt. But that would necessarily lead to an enormous increase in the cost to the people, and therefore there would be a diminished quantity of money to spend on other commodities, therefore while we are all thinking so much now of the education of the rising generation, of physical culture, and of the necessity of getting a strong manhood, we are going by this Convention to limit the supply of food to the great majority of the people of the country. The Secretary to the Board of Trade asked last evening, "Do principles change with dates?" That is a very pertinent question, which should surely have been addressed to the other side of the House, and the right hon. the Colonial Secretary might have given an answer; and if he were consistent to his principles he should support the Amendment of my hon. friend the Member for West Islington. Speaking on the sugar question in this House in August, 1881, the Colonial Secretary said:

> "Why is it that this trade has been so prosperous of late years, so much so that I have heard it currently reported that one of the leaders of this manufacture has made a fortune of £1,000,000 to £2,000,000 in less than twenty years. It is partly, at all events, in consequence of the injudicious system adopted by these countries, which has enabled our manufacturers to get their raw sugar at less than cost price, and has enabled them to undersell the manufacturers of the rest of the world, especially neutral countries."

Why should we to-night endeavour to do away with what the Colonial Secretary says enables us to get sugar at less than cost price and to undersell the manufacturers of the rest of the world? Probably the Colonial Secretary may take this opportunity of showing how the wages of the people of this country can be increased when the price of their food is increased. It is his duty to do so. We have a right to demand that he should show how he proposes to increase the wages of a great majority of the people of the country when we are to give annually £7,000,000 or £8,000,000 more for our sugar to the foreigner. What precedent have we for that?

This whole thing has been engineered by the Anti-Bounty League. The Royal Commission on the condition of the West Indies has reported directly against this Convention, and stated—

> "It must be recollected that the chief outside influence which the Government of certain colonies have to redeem are the representatives of the sugar estates, that these persons are not interested in anything else but sugar, that the establishment of any other industry is often detrimental to their interests, that under such conditions it is the special duty of your Majesty's Government to see that the welfare of the general public is not sacrificed to the interests, or supposed interests, of a small but influential minority which has special means of enforcing its wishes and bringing its claims to notice."

Surely these words prove conclusively that the agitation in favour of the Convention was not got up on the part of the great majority of the people of the West Indies but on behalf of those who owned the sugar estates there. We are not justified in endeavouring to bolster up a decaying industry—decaying on account of their land laws, the indolence of the people, the lack of improved machinery, and the want of enterprise. If we wish to improve the West Indies there is a far better method than allowing our own trade rivals to dictate to us what the fiscal policy of this country should be. When we do that we lay ourselves open to the Members of the Brussels Sugar Commission to dictate to us what shall be the conditions under which we shall carry on our trade with people who buy from us £100,000,000 of goods every year. In my opinion, the people of the West Indies would be infinitely more benefited if we established there a system of peasant proprietors, if we got rid of the "gombeen" man; if we provided, if you like at the Government expense, new machinery for the sugar factories; if we endeavoured to reduce the shipping charges, and secured better conditions of labour for the people. Half-a-million spent in this way would do far better service to the West Indies and to this country than by the ratification of this Convention.

But there is a more serious aspect to the question, and that is the international and the colonial aspect. Now, the United States have not been invited to take part in the Conference, and I think we have a right to know why the United States were not invited. We also have a right to know whether our Government has since received any communication from the United States Government in reference to this Convention. I know it is argued by the members of the Government that America sends us very little sugar. Although that may be true, at the present moment America has a very large sugar-producing power, and under the conditions which it possesses that power may increase year by year. I believe that the amount of sugar imported by the United States last year was £2,500,000 less, than in any previous year, and when its resources are developed it will naturally become an exporting country. Then this Conference in Brussels might say to us, "You shall not continue to receive sugar from the United States in future because it is a countervailing and bounty-giving nation." That is a very serious state of affairs to contemplate. It is absurd to think that we should have a policy dictated by foreigners who are all more or less anxious to capture our markets if they possibly can. But again, have we not got to look after our colonies? The Colonial Secretary is always saying that we should have the power to give preferential tariffs to the colonies; but under the conditions of this Convention we should be excluded from such a course, for by this Convention we are bound to do nothing to interfere with the inflow of sugar from Germany. Germany would therefore have control over our imports from our colonies because it was distinctly stated in the German Parliament by Baron von Thillman, that—

> "As regards England, I can affirm that the Imperial Government will sign no Convention in which we bind ourselves to her as regards export bounties or sugar duty, were she to retain a free hand to treat the raw sugar from her colonies more favourably than German sugar."

The case is even somewhat more serious, because when handing in the ratification of the Convention, Baron Koziebrodzki, of Austria, stated clearly that his Government would not be bound by the reservation Great Britain had inserted, and which Germany would not accept, and that Austria and Hungary would "merely take note of the reservation made by the Royal Government of Great Britain, on the presumption that, in practice, no bounty fed sugar coming from the English self-governing colonies would be imported into the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland during the period of the Convention, and they reserve to themselves a complete liberty of action, in case a considerable importation of such sugar into the United Kingdom should occur during the course of this period." That shows clearly and conclusively that any considerable importation of sugar from any of our colonies where there is any system of bounty or preference will be prohibited by this Convention; and, therefore, I say we have no right to enter lightly into this Convention. There are far better methods of providing for the needs of the West Indies. It is unnecessary that the people of this country should be asked to make such sacrifices and have one of the principal items of their food taxed to such an unreasonable rate, nor ought we to be parties to any such arrangement which permits the traders of Russia, Austria, France, Germany and Belgium, to limit and allot the exports of sugar in such a way as to increase the price in Great Britain, nor ought we to permit foreign nations to dictate our fiscal policy. On these grounds I support the Amendment of my hon. friend.

MR. CUST (Southwark, Bermondsey): Unwilling as I ever am even to criticise for a moment the policy of the Government, I am bound both by consistency and conviction to protest against the further progress of this scheme, not only for its own inherent viciousness, but because of the methods and management by which it has been introduced and forwarded. I quite admit the danger of refusing support to the Government in Acts of an international character; indeed, my attitude is not opposition, but rather in the nature of what I believe in philanthropic circles is called rescue work. We want to save the Government from itself, not by destruction, but by postponement. We want to stop it committing suicide, but we do not want to kill it ourselves.

The President of the Board of Trade expressed a hope that the same speakers would not use the same arguments as last year, and then he himself recapitulated as lucidly, but more concisely, his speech of last year. And here, Sir, on a particular point, I would protest most emphatically against the right hon. Gentleman's sentimental appeal to "National honour," "good faith," "obligations," etc. He appeals first to the preliminary negotiations, then to the Resolution of last year, and then to the signing of the Convention. I will not dwell on how the original approval of the House was obtained. The plan was sprung on us at very short notice indeed. The House was largely in ignorance of the subject, and had not time to appreciate the character of the Blue-book, which had only just been issued. The Colonial Secretary, on the eve of his departure as the apostle of colonial peace, made an appeal to the House not to handicap his future; and I do not think that an expression of approval, which was then obtained, such as it was, in any way bound the honour and good faith of this country. But, apart from these singular methods, a financial treaty expressly differs from all others. The assent of the House must be obtained before such a treaty binds, and this is expressly recognised in this treaty. Article XII. lays down that the treaty can only be ratified and confirmed subject to the passing of this Bill.

It is absurd, therefore, to talk of honour and good faith. If the Government has engaged the country in such an understanding they have grossly exceeded their powers; if they have not, their appeal is, to put it indulgently, mere sentimental rhetoric. We know that France and Austria, two of the most important Powers, equally engaged with ourselves, have admittedly not yet fulfilled the legislative necessities, but we have not heard for a moment that their national honour and good faith are impugned.

So much for the methods and the handling of this proposal. Now what are the motives, and what will be the result? The motive, as we gathered from the debate in November, must be one of three: (1) To benefit this country; (2) to benefit the West Indies; (3) to push the principles of Free Trade.

The case of the West Indies has been already dealt with at length. The one central authority found for us by the Government is the Report of their own Commission, which may be summarised as follows: The West Indies may be saved, but the abolition of bounties will not save them. I will read extracts from that Report, if desired, but all interested have read it already. Here, Sir, I would pray the Government to remember that there is much value in a sense of proportion. When we hear, as we did last night from the Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade, that "great staple industries" are being ruined by bounties, it gives us pause. But when we find that the great staple industry supplies us with something between 2½ per cent. to 5 per cent. of the great staple, and that we are to mulct ourselves in millions to save this tiny fraction, it gives us pause again. It has been shown us *ad nauseam* that sugar is not now the natural industry of the West Indies. The Commission has so reported and has suggested alternatives. In the face of knowledge, evidence, and sense we are being driven to make a great sacrifice to gain a great loss. Surely some sense of proportion is wanting. In the same month we are bleeding to death the East Indies, which form our greatest possession, and for the West Indies, which form our smallest, we are bleeding ourselves when our blood can ill be spared.

Now as to the effect on this country. Sir Henry Norman's calculation of ½d. per £ increase would mean £6,000,000 lost to this country. This the President of the Board of Trade amiably, but quite conjecturally, denies. I will not go into the enormous sums of capital and labour connected with it, which are dependent on cheap sugar, a cheapness that at present at any rate, depends on foreign bounties. We were told last night that the divine Cobden—I say divine in the sense that the dead Roman Emperors were called divine—wished only for the "natural price," whatever that may mean; careless as he was as to whether it was more or less the consumer had to pay. Well, Cobden is dead and our times are other than his! I would only ask the House, did ever any man out of Wonderland, whether in Cobden's time or any other, did ever a customer threaten and bluster and bully a shopkeeper in order to force his prices up? Did ever a man haggle to pay more? Did ever human being remove his custom from a store on the ground that the goods were not nasty, but by far too cheap?

A point much dwelt upon both by the President and the Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade was as to the advantages gained in this country by the abolition of bounties, the right hon. Gentleman read a somewhat musty letter from a Mr. Keiller, a jam maker, dated 1889, which has been raked up from the archives of the Board of Trade to grace this occasion. Mr. Keiller favoured the abolition of bounties, and the Parliamentary Secretary told us that the jam-makers of 1889 "knew better and saw farther than the jam-makers of to-day." Why so, Sir? Was 1889 the Augustan age of English jam-makers? Is it not probable that the jam-makers of to-day, who are unanimous against this Bill, may understand their own jam-making best? So, Sir, if the Bill will not save the West Indies, if the Bill will damage consumers in this country, is it brought in to further the principle of free trade? I never know now-a-days whether to mention the word free trade is profane or whether it is improper. This unhappy Bill puts us all in vexatious positions. The lines of cleavage, nowadays, are somewhat tortuous and zigzag. Anyhow, last year considerable capital was made in support of this Bill, as constituting a sort of encyclical address to all nations, in support of the true doctrine. The Colonial Secretary himself "speaking as a convinced free trader," listened with some alarm to the arguments of the hon. Member for South Shields, a statement in itself which has found a new humour only six months after, and he also observed—

> "You will find within the last few years when the new school of economists have started into existence—talk of the new economists—the new economy is not found on this side of the House, it is found on that, but until the last few years no economist has ever denied bounties absolutely contradict the principles of free trade."

Well, Sir, the whirligig of time brings its revenges.

Now, coming to the vexatious position of this Bill I want to make a suggestion as to the solution of it, and I will in doing so be as short as I can. It seems to me that in strict economic principle, the Opposition and, indeed, all free traders, condemns the Sugar Bounties Convention, because in a sense it protects the 2½ per cent. or 5 per cent. of our sugar supply, which is provided by the West Indian colonies, and indirectly increases the price of the food of the people and raw material. From another point of view, but on equally strict economical principle, they admit that the Bill is aimed against the whole principle of protection as practised on the Continent. They therefore find themselves in the position of the lady who lived with the lady and could not live without her. They find themselves on contrary grounds, bound to support it and bound to reject it. The real solution, I venture to think, Sir, is to be found in the reflection that there is no such thing as political principle, but only political conviction, which must, to be rightly directed, be governed by what is wrongly called opportunism, in a bad sense, but what is essentially realism in a good sense; that is to say, the clear perception of hard facts as they vary from question to question, from year to year, from generation to generation, the ultimate test being the proper prosperity of the country in which you live during the period in which you live in it. It is true, of course, that in the philosophy of politics there are such fundamental ideas as justice and liberty which dominate politics and policy, but these belong rather to the philosopher's study than to the circus of the House of Commons. In the constantly shifting world of politics and business these theories must be made relative to facts. It follows, then, that foreign sugar bounties stand or fall on their own merits, and not as a part of political philosophy.

The Convention, therefore, fails as an eirenicon of free trade. Take the three possible motives of the Bill, not one in any way justifies it. 1. It will not save the West Indies nor benefit them; 2. It will heavily penalise the people of this country; 3. It will not advance the principles of free trade, even if those principles were worth advancing. But further, Sir, if we apply some such practical method as the one I endeavoured to indicate to the present Bill, what do we find are likely to be the results which may flow from its provisions. We abnegate a considerable portion of our commercial freedom and place it in the hands of our commercial rivals. By the original plan of countervailing duties our freedom would have been much more largely preserved, but under this Bill we are helpless. We prepare the ground for the most delicate and discomfortable complications with every foreign Power in the world, whether included in the Convention or not. We run the risk of offending our colonies both sentimentally, commercially and politically. We hamper to a large extent any plan of preferential tariffs and retaliation which many hon. Gentlemen desire. We deliberately—according to the President of the Board of Trade—we deliberately raise the price of sugar to the English consumer in order to benefit producers who are now able to sell to us below the cost of production, because the difference is now paid by foreign taxpayers on our behalf. Sir, I ask the House is the game worth the candle? Is it worth while to sacrifice our liberty, to tie our hands, to let our natural competitors control our national markets, to lessen our wealth, to increase our taxation, to rebuff our colonies and to invite complications abroad. All for the sake of a possible, but purely conjectural, modification in the fluctuations of the price of sugar.

The President of the Board of Trade is pleased, is indeed bound, to carry an optimistic soul. The future of sugar smiles rosily towards him. But, whatever the future sugar monopolists may be, the right hon. Gentleman has no monopoly of inspired conjecture. We all have an equal freehold in the unknown. And some of us, looking to the higher prices and less employment which must almost inevitably follow from this Bill, find the outlook less engaging. It is hardly the moment, perhaps, to make a commitment of opinion when the whole world is being inquired into and convictions are notoriously unsettled. But surely we may seek for caution. We have seen that two of the most important powers concerned, France and Austria, have seen cause to reconsider their position, and from to-day's news it seems likely that the reconsideration will last a very long time. Might we not with honour—which they seem not to have forfeited—and with the caution which safeguards their security, might we not also follow their wise example? The politics of England and of the British Empire are hardly floating on a calm sea under a sky of blue. A proper prudence implies no injury to pride. I respectfully supplicate the Government to pause again, and yet again, before they embark upon a heedless and undesired venture, in which the way is surely perilous and uncertain, and the port they make for is far-off, unknown, and hostile.

*MR. JAMES REID: I wish to say a few words on behalf of the sugar refiners of this country. I may say I am not engaged in sugar refining myself, but on the other hand I happen to represent a constituency which contains one third of the sugar houses still left in this country. The house will hardly be surprised if I make it my standpoint from which to say that which I wish to say. The hon. Member for Devonport referred mostly to the two sugar houses in London—Messrs. Tate and Messrs. Lyle. Now, no sugar refiners in the Kingdom have been more anxious than those two to get me to do all I can to get this Convention Bill carried. Yet no two firms have been more prosperous. When the head of the firm of Lyle's gave up his interest in the firm he did it on the offer to his partner either to pay out and he would remain in the firm, or to be paid out, and go. His partner elected to pay out, and so he retired. I hope, therefore, the hon. Member for Devonport will be a little more cautious when dealing with the prosperity of those two firms. The hon. Member for Peebles and Selkirk put the matter very clearly. These two firms have a great advantage in that they each possess specialties: Messrs. Tate have cubes, and Messrs. Lyle have syrups, and it is largely owing to those specialties that they are so prosperous. I am sure we all wish them continued prosperity. In my opinion the bounty system is rotten to the core, and engenders illegitimate and bastard trading. No man who gets his materials under cost price has a right to compete with others. It is a rotten system of trade, which though it cannot last for ever may last long enough to drive legitimate trade out of the market; and then we shall be at the mercy of the men who come into the market on the back of bounties, who receive bounties, and who then will certainly not be so foolish as to give out of their bounties what they give now. If this system is carried to its logical conclusion, may not confectionery also come into this country bounty-fed. Cobden said that the natural price ought to be the value of every article, but bounty-fed sugar does not come in at the natural price. It is well known that cane sugar and beet sugar can be produced at about the same price. The working men throughout the kingdom are against bounties to a man, and many thousands express the opinion that the bounties ought to be put an end to. Such a thing would increase the labour in various trades. Think of the various trades outside the sugar houses in which labour would be increased; think of the immense consumption of coal, which the sugar houses in this country are responsible for. Those engaged inside the sugar houses are infinitely less in number than those who ought to be engaged outside in trades allied to the sugar trade. This bounty-fed sugar is not fair trading. Sugar refiners in this country want a fair field and no favour; they want their own material at its natural value, if not it may be that British sugar may go to the wall.

As to prohibition versus countervailing duties, I think prohibition is better; and I am not without hope, whatever little differences may exist in this country, that British diplomacy may bring them to an end. In fact, it is hoped in high official circles that the whole thing may come to an end before September. The hon. Member for Launceston said that a majority of the sugar refiners are antiquated, or words to that effect, and he excepted only these two houses in London who are working on specialties; but he said the other refineries were "fire traps." He also said that in 1864 there were sixty houses, a statement the correctness of which I doubt, that now there are only fifteen doing as much work as the said sixty. Surely this is the *reductio ad absurdum*, as it proves that the fifteen which survive have been kept up-to-date. As a matter of fact all modern sugar houses are fireproof—at least I speak for my own constituency, and I am authorised to say that there is no foundation in fact for the hon. Gentleman's statement. And I claim for my constituency that they possess as much enterprise and versatility of method as their southern fellow-subjects; indeed, Scotchmen are generally credited with possessing a larger share.

MR. ROBSON (South Shields): The hon. Member who has just addressed the House has laid down a great principle. Throughout the debate I have been trying to discover the economic principle which underlay all the arguments of the various hon. Members who have spoken. The hon. Member says no man who gets his goods at less than cost has a right to compete with others. I wonder whether the hon. Member or any of his family have ever purchased the goods of a bankrupt. A man who buys a bankrupt stock gets it at less than cost price if he is lucky, and sells it at less than cost price if he is fair. But that has never been considered unfair trading. Now when this Convention was put before the House it was justified by the President of the Board of Trade as an achievement for free trade. What a distance we have got from that in the speeches of to-day and yesterday. Those who have defended the Convention have not professed to do so on the ground of free trade. We have had in support of this Convention speeches which display protection in its most reactionary and mouldy form. The hon. Member for Peebles also laid down in the speech he delivered a short time ago what he regarded as a principle. He said he was connected with trade and spoke feelingly, and he did speak feelingly when he referred to the enormous profits made by the confectioners, which he seemed to think were almost immoral; and then he went on to say that the only persons who prospered under the modern conditions of the sugar trade were those who could buy their goods cheap. This is put before the House as a commercial hardship, which it is the duty of this House to remedy; that there are certain firms who are able to buy large stocks when they are cheap, and sell, I suppose, as dear as they can. That is described as unfair competition. Are we going to adopt the same principle with domestic legislation and foreign affairs ?

For open protection we have to go to the speeches of members of the Government, to the speech of the Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade. This policy of protection is approved not only by the Parliamentary Secretary, but also by the eminent fiscal inquirer, the Prime Minister. I venture to say the Prime Minister's sympathy and desires are just as protectionist as those of his colleagues. Let me make a few observations on that speech, which merits the attention of the House, because it shows the distance we have traversed since the last debate in November. The hon. Member endeavoured to harrow the feelings of the House by describing what would happen to the shipping trade. He told us if we had not the bounties we should not have ships bringing sugar over in a night and carrying back a return cargo in a night, but that they would bring sugar thousands of miles and take a return cargo back thousands of miles. The result of that is that you not only have dear food, but you must do more work for it. Then the hon. Gentleman went on to mention another fact, which he thought would have a great effect on his argument. He said there had been a reduction of 50 per cent. in the number of men engaged in the sugar trade, and the hon. Gentleman left it to be inferred by the House that this was a hardship which legislation ought to remedy. The hon. Member's speech suggested in the latter part an answer to that. He said that bounties had not cheapened sugar. Although, perhaps, the number of men employed has been reduced, there is by no means a corresponding reduction in the trade. A careful examination of the figures will show that the reduction in the number of tons refined is not great, but there has been an improvement in the quality. There is certainly now a better output in the sugar trade than there was in some of the years preceding the application of the bounties. That, I think, accounts for the reduction in the number of men employed. The hon. Member opposite suggested that the lot of 50 per cent. of the men dismissed from their work was a very hard one, and he asked what comfort is it to those men to hear that employment has increased in Dundee. It may not be much comfort; on the contrary, it is a misfortune to men in any trade when competition reduces the number employed, but we have not to consider the interests of any particular trade, but the interests of the whole community, and it is a comfort to say, if we hear that 50 per cent. of the men employed have suffered from the competition, that every man employed in other trades to a still larger degree is benefited by the same circumstances. The Parliamentary Secretary referred to the silk trade, and pointed out that whereas Coventry used to manufacture silks, bicycles were now made largely in that town. But why does Coventry not go on making silks ? Because we can buy them cheaper elsewhere, and we have to pay for them by the manufacture and export of other goods. Therefore it pays us to make goods for export in order to pay for cheap silks rather than make silks at profits smaller than we can obtain in other industrial spheres. That is why we have parted with some of our silk trade, and we are acting upon the same principle as when anyone goes to his office or chambers to make a profit in order to get money to buy his own clothes and boots. It is better for a man to devote his skill and energy to the trade in which he can make the most money, so that he may be able to supply his wants in other directions. That is the principle upon which England has parted with so many of her minor trades, with results beneficial to her general prosperity.

The hon. Gentleman opposite has shown that any observations made in direct conflict with foreign and domestic trades are sure to meet with approval on the front Ministerial Bench. We have to realise not only that the Government are inclined to make an attack upon the food of the people, but they are making a deliberate attack upon the foreign trade of this country. They are attacking it because they know not what they do, but they are attacking it all the same. The hon. Member spoke of the cartels which the President of the Board of Trade said were practically being destroyed by the operation of this Convention. The right hon. Gentleman had the prudence not to enter too much into argument or explanation upon that point. He said the Convention would make cartels difficult or impossible. The Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade went on to explain how cartels had been made impossible. I use the word "cartel," but one might better use the word trust or syndicate. The Parliamentary Secretary went on to describe how this had been made more difficult. My contention is that that which enables a syndicate to export at a lower price than it sells to the consumer is a protective duty. By this Convention you put a surtax of 2s. 6d. per cwt. on sugar. If a country forms a syndicate for a cartel, they can charge the consumer 2s. 6d. a cwt. more than they would otherwise be able to charge, and they can get the benefit of the protective tax. That enables them to sell their produce abroad at a lower price than to the home consumer, so that the old cartel which prevailed in Germany enabled the producer to give dearer sugar to the home market and cheaper sugar to the English market. The Parliamentary Secretary says that is made more difficult, but it is not made impossible because there is still a surtax, and to that extent a syndicate is still feasible, and to the same extent there may be an export at less than cost price. Although the operation of cartels is not made impossible, they are in some measure restricted. The Parliamentary Secretary and his Government have enabled the German producer to make a new kind of cartel. They have enabled the German producer to make a cartel which aims not at giving England cheaper sugar, but at giving her dearer sugar.

THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. BONAR LAW, Glasgow, Blackfriars): The cartel to which the hon. and learned Member refers is only possible on account of the monopoly, and the Convention kills the monopoly and does not create it.

MR. ROBSON: Let us see what is happening now. At the end of July last two telegrams appeared in the *Times* on this point. The first pointed out that the sugar producers in the various countries which were parties to the Convention had combined, and they had formed an international cartel which otherwise would never have been possible. [AN HON. MEMBER: Why?] The hon. Member asks "Why?" It was not possible before to get all these producers to combine, because England was then free to buy from those who did not form part of the cartel. Depend upon it if combination, apart from this Convention, had been possible between Germany and France, we should have had it; but it was not possible until the Colonial Secretary, the President of the Board of Trade, and the Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade made it possible. They made this new international cartel not merely possible but inevitable, because they put us under the disadvantage of not being able to buy from anyone except the members of this cartel. Therefore this Commission is under the control of the sugar-producers of the Continent. We have assisted the formation of this organisation, giving it assistance of the most invaluable kind by binding ourselves not to buy from their rivals. If anyone does not join in the Convention, but persists in the enormity of sending us bounty-fed sugar, we shall have to refuse to buy it. Foreign countries enter this Convention with perfect security, because before they were afraid of the competition which keeps so many men from entering into combinations. All that is now put on one side, and combination is made easy. We have now refused to treat with anyone except those who belong to this combination. We have now got a new international cartel not to make our sugar cheaper, for that would be totally contrary to the gospel of scarcity put forward by this Ministry, but to make our sugar dearer. The telegram I referred to stated that it was proposed to raise the price of sugar in the English market by about two francs. Another telegram said it had been proposed to countervail the bounty-fed sugar from Russia. That has apparently been accepted by the Commission. The telegram went on to say that the Commission had hung up its resolution with regard to a countervailing duty on sugar from Russia, and it stated that Russia had joined this new international cartel. I have no doubt we shall have from the Colonial Secretary some official diplomatic reason as to why the Commission has allowed the final steps taken against Russia. The business reason is obvious enough, and Russia has joined the new cartel. Her assistance was valuable, and there is no reason why she should remain outside. This is an illustration of the extent to which the Commission is dominated by the foreign producer, and we have put ourselves almost entirely into their hands. Under these new circumstances, are we not entitled to ask hon. Members opposite who have received this Convention as a free trade proposal to reconsider their position?

It was pointed out that it actually forbade a colonial preference. So far as retaliation is concerned, the Convention put on some air of financial orthodoxy by putting countervailing duties in the background and putting forward prohibition—prohibition being justified by the analogy of diseased cattle and things of that sort. Now those flimsy pretences which prevailed when the Convention was first put before the House avail no longer. The Government are unmasking their guns. This Convention is a deliberate step in their new policy of founding the Empire on the artificial scarcity and dearness of the food supply. When the Convention was first put before us the Colonial Secretary justified it on grounds of Imperialism. Now we know what his Imperialism means. We have had various types of Imperialism in the history of mankind. We have had the military empire; we have had the colonial and commercial empire founded upon consent; and now we are to have an empire founded upon theories of scarcity. We are to have a sort of starvation Imperialism. I would ask hon. Members opposite who believe in free trade whether they are prepared to join the banners of that new Imperialism, or whether they would not rather take the opportunity of at once deserting them? This Convention does not profess to add anything to the revenue of the country. It has no practical object except to raise prices. Its only object is artificial dealing. That which was first introduced and justified as an exception is an exception no longer. Dear sugar must now takes its place with dear bread and dear meat as the third pillar of the new protectionist Imperialism of the Colonial Secretary. There seemed to be an idea that we were entitled to take almost any measure in order to retaliate on those aggressive invasions of our free trade by foreign countries. It seems to be thought that free trade has no power of resistance, and that the free traders of England were incapable of retaliation without assistance from legislation. But is it really a fact that free trade is so entirely without the power of retaliation? We know that protection is sometimes a dangerous method of retaliation by the instances which have been given in this debate. It deprives us of our right and power to protect our own market. The German sends over to this country goods artificially cheap. The English free trader accepts all the financial advantages which those cheap goods give him. He will take these advantages lying down if he cannot get them in any other fashion. And having got these financial advantages he promptly proceeds to retaliate upon the German with cheap jam. That is the retaliation of free trade. The first penalty which the German jam manufacturer pays for his own economic stupidity is his exclusion from neutral markets. But that is not all. He very soon finds that his own market for confectionery and sugar preserves is invaded, as the result of the bounty he gives on commodities exported to another country. Is not that a sufficient retaliation? The German manufacturer of sugar preserves thinks it is more than enough, and as he suffers from this painful retaliation of free trade in his own markets, who is it that comes along to heal his wounds and soothe his sorrows? Why! It is the Colonial Secretary in his Sugar Convention. The right hon. Gentleman says to the Germans—"We will protect you against the results of your own stupidity by this Sugar Convention!" I commend that to the hon. Member for the Toxteth Division, who says that he is supporting the Convention on the ground that it is to destroy bounties founded on a vicious principle. Undoubtedly if the nations of the Continent would agree to accept free trade we should be very glad indeed to see these bounties abolished. Otherwise the bounties ought to be retained as an object lesson in free trade. There is no better lesson in free trade than the money which the German nation has to pay for these bounties.

I desire to draw attention to a point which does not seem to have been quite fully dealt with, although the hon. Member for Dundee touched upon it in some measure, and that is the bearing of this Convention on the most-favoured-nation clause. There can be no doubt that this Convention is an infringement of that clause. That clause in nearly all the treaties in which it is to be found—there are nearly fifty of them—forbids any party to the treaty from prohibiting the goods of the other party from free access to its market. America endeavoured some years ago to limit the construction of that clause in a way that would make it almost valueless. It sought to make a treaty with some small island in the Pacific, by which it should give particular advantages to the other party, and the other party should give particular advantages to it. It claimed under that treaty special advantages and concessions which were not to be shared by England, who claimed to be entitled to them under the most-favoured-nation clause. England strenuously resisted that contention. It was resisted by Lord Granville, and it has been resisted ever since. Our argument has always been for an unconditional interpretation of that clause. Our contention has always been that in any advantage which either party in such a treaty gives to any outside nation, the other party in the treaty is entitled to share. The Government have accepted the American contention in relation to this Convention. They are now saying with regard, for instance, to Russia, that they are entitled to prohibit the goods of Russia because they have a special reason for that, although the most-favoured-nation clause is in Russia's treaty with us. It is a very serious matter for this country, because we have surrendered our contention for the unconditional construction of the clause. We would not be able to renew that argument. Indeed, there is no point of view, commercial, international, and diplomatic, from which the Convention is not an unmitigated mischief, and I hope the House will decide to back out of it altogether.

*SIR EDGAR VINCENT (Exeter): In the speech of the hon. Member for South Shields, to which I listened with pleasure, he referred to the action of cartels. It seems to me that some hon. Gentlemen in this House lose their heads when they have to discuss the question of cartels. I venture to think that some of this alarm is somewhat exaggerated, for so far as I am acquainted with it the principal action of these combinations has resulted in selling to this country sugar under its cost price, and buying from this country certain ships at considerably above their value. I would venture to ask the House to keep all its coolness in considering the result of their action, and not to lose confidence in the virtue of free and open competition. I feel that I owe an apology to the House for taking part in this debate. When I observe the serene calmness with which some hon. Gentlemen state what will be the price of sugar during the next ten years, it appears to me that I have strayed into some conclave of supernatural beings, and that an ordinary man with some experience of these matters can hardly venture to express an opinion. The President of the Board of Trade has vouchsafed us a glimpse into the future. That kind of fore-knowledge and prescience, though of great value here, is of even greater value in another region, and if the right hon. Gentleman would transfer his talents we should lose but he might undoubtedly amass in the course of a very short time a most gigantic fortune. I venture to say that a large number of hon. Members in this House will agree to this proposition: that a proper policy for this country to adopt in regard to sugar is difficult and intricate; and if this view is correct it appears to me to follow that we should regret that action was not preceded by full discussion, directed to ascertain what the result would be of our entering into this Sugar Convention. I go so far as to say that in this case inquiry should have preceded action; and by inquiry I mean full and open discussion before an impartial tribunal– an examination under which evidence could be sifted, tested, discussed, and if necessary rebutted. In matters of this kind I am old-fashioned enough to wish to know the precise results which would follow any course of action before committing the country to engagements of an entirely novel, and of an extremely complicated character.

The Secretary of State for the Colonies stated last November that a consideration of this question involved two sides, the moral and the material. I altogether agree with that view, but it appears to me that an unjustifiable corollary is frequently attached to it—viz., that there is a necessary contradiction between the considerations on each side. I altogether dissent from the opinion, which is really largely held, that it is only necessary to prove that a given policy is bad business in order to be convinced that it it high policy. Viewed on larger lines, what is the state of the case in the plainest possible terms? We are asked to intervene in the interests of certain producers of sugar, and with that end in view to raise the price at which they can sell sugar in this country. Now, I think it is admitted that it is impossible to raise the price of sugar to the rate at which the West Indies can sell it, without at the same time raising the price of sugar sent to us by foreign countries. Remember, that these foreign countries give us more than 90 per cent. of our consumption. It appears to me to be admitted by the supporters of the Bill that the main object of it is to raise the level of prices to that at which the West Indian producers can sell their goods, but under the system of the Bill it is impossible to achieve that without largely increasing the price which we will have to pay to foreign countries. In 1902 this country obtained 31,500,000 cwt. of sugar; we paid £15,000,000, and of this £1,000,000 went to the colonies and £14,000,000 went abroad. Now, under the Convention what will be the case? For the identical quantity of sugar we shall have to pay, according to the best calculation, not £15,000,000, but £22,000,000, and of the additional £7,000,000 which this country will pay £6,500,000 will go to foreign countries and only £500,000 will go to our fellow subjects in the colonies. I will not deny that that proportion may gradually change; that the amount supplied by the colonies may become larger, and the amount supplied by foreign Powers become somewhat smaller. But the change will be gradual, and will be only partial in its effects, so that the permanent result will be an increase of the price we pay, leaving a larger proportion of the money to go abroad, and only a smaller proportion of the money to go to the colonies.

Is that good business? Is the Convention to be justified as a specimen of protection, or a specimen of free trade? I will not deduce any argument from the quarter from which the initiative of the Convention arose, or, if I may use the term, from the port from which the vessel hails; nor will I refer to the speech which we heard last night from the Secretary to the Board of Trade, which appeared to me to be a purely protectionist deliverance. I shall judge the policy solely by its anticipated, its avowed and probable results; and I say that this is a measure destined to advance a particular interest as opposed to the general interest. It is framed in order to give an advantage to the producer at the cost of the consumer, and so far as I understand it, it is absolutely analogous in its results to those Acts which abroad are supported by protectionist arguments, and which are aided by protectionist funds. In so far as it differs from the usual Acts of protectionist countries, it appears to me to differ in this, that the trade to be protected is unusually small, and the sacrifice to be made is unusually great. I confess that I am somewhat surprised to see the very able and skilful advocates of protection in this House supporting this measure; because it appears to me to put their favourite device in an altogether unfavourable light. I almost feel a suspicion that they desire to press this Bill through in order to have on the Statute-book something compared to which even preferential tariffs will be advantageous. Now, the Convention has also received a certain amount of support because it is supposed to have about it a spice or flavour of retaliation. It is intended to put an end to the nefarious practices of certain foreign countries. But even from this point of view, I rather doubt whether it deserves any enthusiastic support; because while intelligent retaliation—if there is such a thing—must be directed against those who have done us some injury, this is directed against those whose only fault has been to sell us their produce and their goods at too cheap a rate. And while retaliation is necessarily intended to apply some pressure against some foreign countries, this Bill gets these foreign countries out of a great difficulty, and, to use the expression of the President of the Board of Trade, relieves them of a very heavy yoke. It will thus be seen that while the Convention has many of the disadvantages both of protection and retaliation, it does not carry with it any but the smallest of their pretended benefits. The Bill, is indeed, a bad example of a bad school.

There is one other plea on which the policy of the Convention may be defended. It may be said that bounties are opposed to the strict theory of free trade, and I can understand an enthusiastic doctrinaire, thoroughly imbued with a kind of religious fervour for free trade, setting forth on a crusade, and laying about him to destroy all those who do not accept his faith in its fullest spirit. But can that argument be used by those who, before this Bill receives the final sanction of this House, already taunt free traders with their adherence to old shibboleths, and who appeal from principles and from theory to immediate practical trade advantage. Immediate practical trade advantage in the present instance is certainly against the policy of the Bill, and so it does not lie with hon. and right hon. Gentlemen to appeal to general theory in which they do not believe, and which they are doing their utmost to destroy. Again, there is another argument which has been used—viz., that apart from its probable effect in raising the price of sugar, the result of the Convention will be to steady the price. But surely if that were the sole object, it is not beyond the ingenuity of right hon. Gentlemen on the Treasury Bench to invent some system which would only affect the price when it fell below a certain level, and not raise the price both when sugar is dear and when it is cheap. I am opposed to this Convention on a wider ground—viz., that it is the first instance within my knowledge in which the action of the British Government has been employed to render dearer an article of general consumption. I thoroughly distrust the intervention of the Government in matters of this kind, merely because some producer or some manufacturer goes to the Government and complains of what he terms "unfair competition." I do not know what definition can be given of the term "unfair competition." I thoroughly distrust the intervention of the Government in matters of this kind to rectify the price and to remedy what is merely a private grievance at the public expense. I am against the Convention, because it appears to me to raise the price of food to the people without bringing any countervailing advantage to His Majesty's Treasury. I am convinced that this House ought not to tolerate any measure which increases the cost of food, except to the extent necessary for the purpose of revenue; and I believe that this Convention was entered into without full knowledge on the part of the country, and without, perhaps, full knowledge on the part of its authors as to its probable commercial effect. I hope, therefore, that all those who, in common with myself, fear a return of this country to protection, both on moral and material grounds, will see in this Convention an example of the kind of legislation, and the kind of negotiation which we must expect if protection and fair trade are to be the guiding principles of our policy.

*MR. LAWRENCE (Liverpool, Abercromby) said several hon. Members had referred to this as a new question, and as if, forsooth, it had not been before the country for something like forty years. The fact is, that the hon. and learned Gentleman who last spoke has been for a long time serving the interests of his country abroad, and therefore he has come back fresh with the old ideas which were entertained when he left these shores. He has not kept in touch with the movement of public opinion in regard to this very burning question. I was very much struck with the speech of the hon. and learned Gentleman opposite, who on the strength of a telegram on which he based half his speech with reference to an informal conference at Brussels, told the House that the Convention would render the cartel system twice as b d as it was before. The fact is, that what the hon. and learned Gentleman referred to was a meeting of producers, who, having on hand something like 1,500,000 tons of sugar for which they could not get a market, were trying to do something to raise the value of the commodity of which they had such a large stock. The hon. and learned Gentleman has really only found a mare's nest, which might perhaps be worthy of being put before a common jury. Hon. Members have harped upon the suggestion that this Convention is going to recreate a monopoly. If ever there was a monopoly it exists at present, and this Convention is, in Canning's phrase, an effort to call in the new world to redress the balance of the old. No cartel, syndicate, or system that is capable of being formed in Europe with varying tongues and nationalities, can be otherwise than doomed to emphatic failure when the new world and the cane-producing countries are called into their proper output, It is perfectly obvious that under the Convention the produce of cane would enter into a fair competition with the cultivation of beet; and the cane growers would not enter into the same conference with the beet producers. We are told that the price of sugar will go up enormously, but I desire to point out how impossible that is when the consuming world has the temperate and tropical zones to draw upon.

Another argument is that this Convention will do the West Indies no good. I would ask business men, is it not extraordinary that for no less than a generation the sugar production of the West Indies although submitted to the keenest competition still survives. What industry on the face of the globe could have withstood such competition for so many years and yet still be in the condition the West Indian sugar industry is now in? It is perfectly certain that the West Indies, with their natural advantages, only want a fair opportunity in order to grow sugar as well and cheaply as any part of the temperate zone. It is absurd to think that a region with such natural advantages can, if not handicapped by artificial restrictions, fail to succeed. Stress has been laid upon the fact that the West Indies only produce a small percentage of the sugar imported into this country. Whose fault is that? Time was when most of our sugar came from the tropics, and it is entirely owing to artificial circumstances that the present proportion is so low. I would remind the House moreover that beet sugar from the earliest stages of its existence has been subject to bounty-feeding arrangements and rose to the position it now occupies entirely owing to artificial treatment. It is an interesting and important fact that whether in the tropics or in Europe the production of sugar per acre, whether beet or cane, is about the same, and the labour is practically the same. There is, therefore, every reason to believe that those two sources of supply will continue, under proper and legitimate competition, satisfactorily to supply the wants of the world. It was entirely owing to the over production caused by the present artificial system that prices got to the absurd and abnormal condition of last year. It is quite unfair and unbusinesslike to quote a special artificial figure, such as that of last year, and say that the people of England, especially the working classes, will criticise any action which allows the important supply of sugar to be produced under legitimate and fair circumstances. Speaking for my own constituents, whom I have known intimately now for seventeen years, I am perfectly prepared to say that they will always be, as they have always been, cordially responsive whenever I invited them to be just to the colonies. We are asking for no preference, but simply that England shall be just to the colonies of which she is the trustee. Those colonies are held in the hollow of the hand of the mother country, which enjoys the benefit, with which she has no intention of parting, of the two great harbours of St. Lucia and Jamaica, which command the approach to the future Panama Canal The mother country may fairly be called upon to discharge her high duty, and although she has been tardy hitherto in recognising the claims upon her, I feel that new ideas have of late years arisen, and that the time is coming when she will not be backward in discharging the obligations of her high position. It is quite a mistake for the House to think this is a measure promoted in the interest of capitalists. If the Members of the House had been with me in Jamaica in February last and stood by when certain black workmen were informed that the cultivation of sugar was going to cease in the district where they lived, they would have recognised that it was not a question of capitalists but of the daily bread of those who are, equally with all members of the Empire, British subjects.

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the debate stood adjourned till this Evening's Sitting.

EVENING SITTING.

SUGAR CONVENTION BILL.

[Second Reading.]

Order read for resuming adjourned debate on Amendment proposed to Question [28th July], "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Which Amendment was—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day three months.'"—(*Mr. Lough.*)

Question again proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

Debate resumed.

*Mr. LAWRENCE: I was pointing out, however imperfectly, the conditions and circumstances under which this Bill is brought forward. So far as the West Indies are concerned, it is not demanded merely for the capitalists but for the masses of the people. The right hon. Member for Aberdeen taxed the planters with having no spirit, enterprise or machinery. If he had even for half-an-hour borne the burden and the heat of the day of carrying on the great sugar industry with which the planters are intrusted, and had had to carry on that industry with the competition and the handicap of these bounties, varying from 25s. to, in the case of the Argentine, I think, £7 a ton, the value of a ton of sugar varying from £5 to £10, I think even the right hon. Gentleman would have felt it was no wonder that the planters might have lost spirit and in some measure enterprise. It could hardly be expected that they could find up-to-date machinery. But whether or not in the future the present planters will be able to face the new circumstances in which they will find themselves, I appeal on behalf of the black labourers, equally our fellow-subjects, that sugar shall not be allowed to go out of cultivation, and that even if planters here and there have to give way it will be a boon to the black labourers up and down the Islands that these acres should be kept in sugar cultivation. There are some well meaning Unionists, who probably never spent £5 on a speculative undertaking, who have advocated that these Islands should throw up one of the great staple industries of the world in order to undertake the speculative cultivation of fruit. I should like to know how many of those who have grown fruit would not exchange that cultivation for the great industry of sugar, upon which staple you might sit for a week or a month, and on which you are not dependent upon the special circumstances attending the growing of a perishable crop like fruit. I have but imperfect patience with those Unionists, like the right hon. Member for Cambridge, who pointed to Egypt and Java and asked why should the West Indies fail where they had succeeded. The blacks in Java, I have heard, are little better than slaves, and certainly no better than prædial serfs. The Dutch will not allow the blacks there to engage in any of the higher trades, but compel them to cultivate the soil. And as for Egypt, is that a comparison for an intelligent person to make with the West Indies; a country which, under its system of irrigation, can turn out four crops a year; which has no mountainous districts. We in the West Indies have large mountainous districts, and great droughts, and for hon. and right hon. Gentlemen to come down here and talk this colossal nonsense makes those who do know something about the subject feel righteously indignant.

The hon. Member for Exeter seems to think it is unnecessary even to grant this district justice because it is so small. Is justice to be confined only to the counting of heads? Are we to measure it by what it has to cost us? Several hon. Gentlemen think that if we are to be just we must be just at the cheapest price, and the cheapest way to deal with this matter is to give doles. We know what doles in England are. They pauperise those who receive and they do not redound to the credit of those who give them. I repudiate such churlish justice. If you wish to keep a poor relation from you give him a dole. But these Islands are not destined by Providence to be poor relations. Give them a fair chance and they will be as they were before—jewels in the British Crown. But if they are neglected and there is an utter lack of sympathy and a disregard for them in the United Kingdom, I can assure the House that, however reluctantly, their hearts will be drawn towards the United States, of which they geographically form part. They go to the United States now because they have not free access to our markets, and it is absurd to say they have when we allow a protective wall to rise up and keep them off. We are driving them to the United States. If they are not a part of the United States the time will soon come when the trade of these Islands will not be allowed to enter into the ports of the United States. Even now they only go there under a 40 per cent. duty, but with that they could compete with France under countervailing duties; but in a short time those ports will be closed, and inasmuch as these Islands form part of this great Empire, they are entitled ask for that fairness of treatment which one British subject can claim from another. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for Aberdeen gave some faltering and imperfect excuse for the reason why he voted £250,000 last November for these Islands. What are the facts of the case? The West Indian Islands had some reason to think that in the Brussels Convention the Government would consider their interests. As a matter of fact, when the Convention met the other Governments said they could not allow this Convention to come into force until they had given their local industries twelve months notice, and His Majesty's Government sacrificed these Islands. Then they came forward and said, "As we have sacrificed you, we will give you something in order that you may hold over for a little while;" and although the dole in that way may have done some good it only added to the liability of the planters. It was loaned to the planters at 6 per cent., and money lent at such a price at best is but doubtful advantage to the borrower.

Right hon. Gentlemen have said we must have new methods. There will be new methods, and there may be new men, but if this Bill passes there will be an incentive to the cultivation of sugar which, for thirty or forty years there never has been. Some hon. Members have touched on the question as to how far this Convention is in accordance with the principles of free trade. I think we had better give up the term of free trade. [Loud OPPOSITION laughter.] Hon. Members opposite who laugh know perfectly well they never have had free trade. The hon. Member for South Shields said this was the thin end of the wedge of the abolition of free trade. I should like to know when we have had free trade, and also when we should have it. I think one hon. Member was more correct when he said this Convention was the first step to anything like free trade since the French Treaty of 1860. There never will be free trade unless by negotiation; and as this Convention produces an agreement between various countries and various classes upon the subject of the abolition of the bounties I think it is the first step towards free trade. Mr. Speaker, I have finished. I would only add that I regret that there should have been any need for this Convention whatever. I think it is an anomaly that we should have to get the European Powers in conclave and to say to them, "We intend to carry out our fiscal system, and we hope you will allow us to do so." I hope the day is rapidly coming when we shall think and act for ourselves; when we shall act entirely with regard to our own interests, independent of what foreign Powers may think of us. They will be perfectly convinced that we shall do what is just to them, and the sooner we think and act for ourselves the better it will be for the people of this country.

*Sir WILLIAM HOLLAND (Yorkshire, W.R., Rotherham): The right hon. Gentleman who has just sat down objects to the kind of free trade we have because, I suppose, he does not think it goes far enough. But some of us would rather have one-sided free trade than no free trade at all, because under it we are at least able to buy in the cheapest market. We would of course infinitely rather have free trade all round, but if those to whom we sell are indifferent to the importance of being able to buy on the best terms possible, that is a matter for them to consider and not for us. The hon. Gentleman expressed a decided preference for independence on the part of His Majesty's Government, and said we ought to act for ourselves; but one of the criticisms we have to make to this Convention is, that if we accept it a foreign Commission will act for us, and we shall have hardly any voice in the matter. I am against this Convention because it is a one-sided bargain. The foreigner is to have all the gain and we are to have all the loss. I do not think in these negotiations the interests of the United Kingdom have been adequately safeguarded. I know that at Brussels, when the negotiations were proceeding, the British refiners and the West Indian sugar planters were represented, and it was only right they should be adequately represented. But who was it that voiced the claim of the toiling millions of sugar consumers in this country? I am against this Convention because those millions are deprived of the inalienable right to buy their sugar in the cheapest market. It is an incontrovertible fact that cheap sugar has been of great advantage to this country because it has conduced to the health of the people And I am strongly in favour of leaving the foreigner to make his own arrangements for the abolition of these bounties. I think he will be likely to abolish them without our assistance or encouragement when he gets tired of paying our sugar bill. In the matter of sugar the foreigner's interest is opposed to ours. He is the seller and we are the buyers, but unfortunately his views have prevailed throughout with these negotiations rather than the views of this country. As I had the honour to say in November last, if a man chooses to sell goods to "A" below cost and to recoup himself by overcharging "B," it is for "B" to put a stop to the transaction rather than "A." We are in the position of "A" on this occasion, and the foreigner is in the position of "B." There may be some hard cases amongst the sugar refiners on the one hand or the sugar planters on the other, but those cases this House would be glad I am sure to deal with and remedy on their merits.

It has been said that the West Indies are largely dependent on the sugar crop. In my opinion they are far too dependent upon it. If growing sugar does not pay there are other crops to which the planters can turn their attention There is another great staple which could be grown in the West Indies, and that is cotton, for which the climate is well suited, and I can vouch for it that the cotton so grown, would at present prices pay well, and be warmly welcomed by Lancashire, where the spinners are hungering for larger supplies. If we hold aloof from this Convention it will still be open to the other signatory powers to adhere to it—and if that is done the sugar bounties will go and we shall have a free hand. But the fact is, this Convention is not merely to abolish bounties or a portion of them. This Convention does much more, inasmuch as it allows a foreign Commission to have a finger in our pie, in the pie of our colonies, and in the pie of our foreign relations. It is obvious, as the Member for Oldham said this afternoon, that the consumer under this convention will not be so valuable a customer for other commodities in the home market. Whatever the amount of the increase in the price of sugar may be, that amount will be abstracted from the pockets of the consumers of this country, and *pro tanto* the home trade will be crippled in its purchasing power. In many trades this will be a heavy burden, besides the particular industries which depend on low-priced sugar. I noticed the President of the Board of Trade and the Secretary to the Board of Trade both quoted in their speeches an opinion given by the firm of Keiller many years ago, and although it was pointed out that that opinion was contrary to a later opinion given by the same firm, both the right hon. and the hon. Gentleman seemed to consider the older opinion of this particular firm was the wiser opinion of the two. I hope they will apply the same test in another direction. I wish they would apply that test to the Colonial Secretary himself. If they considered in his case that the older opinion was the wiser one, then neither countervailing duties nor prohibition nor preferential duties would have a shadow of a chance of acceptance, because the right hon. Gentleman when he was President of the Board of Trade, said :

> "To impose countervailing duties in order to neutralise the indirect sugar bounties would be to take the first step in reversing our Free Trade policy, which was adopted on the clearest ground of argument, and has conferred immense advantages on the industrial classes of this country.
>
> "Industrial Classes."

I hope the Secretary to the Board of Trade will commend the earlier opinion of the Colonial Secretary which I have just read. I believe that what the Colonial Secretary then said is absolutely true : that in adopting a system of countervailing duties we should be taking the first step towards the reversal of the policy of free trade. That step, however, was taken a year ago at Brussels and now we are threatened with another step, viz., Preferential Tariffs and Retaliatory duties which we hold to be certainly pointing in the direction of protection. I, for one, am against a policy of protection in this country, because it confers on an individual the right to make a legal raid on the public purse to his own advantage. I do not know why the Government is making such a dead set on the food of the people. A tax on sugar was imposed not so long ago, which increased the price by a halfpenny a lb., and now we are to have a further tax imposed by this Convention ; and, in addition, we are threatened with a heavy corn tax. But the yield of the sugar tax imposed two years ago went into the Exchequer, whereas not a penny of this new tax will find its way there.

It is impossible for us to estimate the far-reaching consequences and complications of the penal or prohibitive clauses of this Convention. It may be said we shall have the control of its application, but, as a matter of fact, we shall be in a very small minority in this Convention, and shall be liable to be out-voted on every occasion. This prohibition of sugar imports from certain countries may involve us in a tariff war with Russia and the United States of America, at the bidding of this Commission, however much we may desire to maintain good relations with those countries. If there be an enemy of this country on the Commission he may force us to pick a quarrel with nations with whom we otherwise should be on friendly terms. The newspapers only this morning give us an illustration of the result of the intervention of this Convention for we read that a crisis has arisen between Austria and Hungary. Only this very day *The Times* says—

> "The situation has become sufficiently strained to necessitate the intervention of the Emperor."

All because of the meddling of this Commission in Brussels ; because one of these two countries does not take the same view exactly that the Brussels Commission takes. I think it is infinitely safer and wiser for us to keep the control of our own fiscal arrangements in our own hands. I think that, so far from drawing the colonies closer to the mother country, this legislation will be much more likely to have a disruptive tendency. Some time ago the late Lord Pirbright who, as we know, had the strongest possible sympathy with the sugar trade, used some very strong language in respect to this particular question. He said :—

> "What business is it of ours to pull chestnuts out of the fire for France? We give no surtax, and we bind ourselves on behalf of our Crown colonies never to give preferential treatment for the benefit of their sugar. Therefore the interference of our delegates, presumably with the knowledge and consent of the Cabinet, in a matter which in no way concerned them, was not only gratuitous but absurd and most dangerous."

I think this blowing hot and cold with regard to preferential duties must puzzle our colonies and must create in them most unfortunate impressions, and many explanations will be necessary to account for these apparent contradictions. The task of making those explanations would deter any ordinary man, but I do not think the Colonial Secretary will be deterred from an undertaking of this kind by any such considerations. We are constantly being urged to place the present Government in a position to drive a bargain with foreign nations

—in regard to that aspect of the case I suppose we shall hear a good deal during the coming months. Members of the Government, and the Prime Minister in particular, have said again and again during the last few weeks that we were handicapped because we had no power of negotiating—that was the word he used—but we must be very cautious in handing over to the Government the power to drive a bargain when we see the poor use they have made of it in this Convention, where they gave away so much and got so little in return.

*MR. DUKE (Plymouth): This debate has had one distinct advantage. It has made clear to the country that the Party sitting opposite has made up its mind to cast its vote in favour of a system of bounties.

MR. LOUGH: Against a surtax.

*MR. DUKE: I am not sure that they will be so delighted with the prospect when they come to consider it as a naked proposition, because for forty years the Party opposite, in common with the Party sitting on this side, has offered a resolute and determined opposition to bounties. There was no more resolute opponent of bounties than Mr. Gladstone. From 1862 till the end of his life Mr. Gladstone did all in his power to put an end to the system of bounties, and as recently as 1881 he said, speaking of the argument that "the consumer gets the benefit"—

> "I do not think that any benefit founded on inequality and injustice can bring good even to the consumer."

Hon. Gentlemen on that side of the House do not seem quite so cheerful, after hearing the views of Mr. Gladstone. It certainly does seem a little remarkable that after forty years of devoted and studied effort by both great Parties to get rid of a system as obnoxious to free trade as it is to the prosperity of this country, that one Party should turn on the other and condemn in terms of obloquy, personal censure and reproach those efforts which have at last led to success that which has been the policy of both Parties. For my part I should like to know what such conduct means; and I suppose it means that within a year or a few months there is a general election coming on, and that it will be convenient for the hon. Gentlemen opposite then to say to any workman of this country who does not know that he is being deceived—[OPPOSITION laughter.] I will conclude my sentence and hon. Members will know whether it is what they intended to say—"The Government who have got rid of these bounties, which it has been our common policy to get rid of, have placed a burden of £7,000,000 upon you." Is that what hon. Gentlemen opposite intend to tell the people of the country who do not know? It seems to me that it is neither fair nor wise to tell people who do not know that which is not true. Now if there is an authority whom hon. Gentlemen used to respect next to Mr. Gladstone it is Lord Farrer, I do not know whether they still respect him or have changed their policy and their predilections; but Lord Farrer six years ago said to the Cobden Club—

Sir William Holland.

> "We must admit to the fullest degree that sugar bounties are an abomination."

Hon. Members opposite do not think so now; they think now that bounties are a great public benefit. They argue now that bounties ought to be continued because sometimes they may make sugar a little cheaper.

Lord Farrer said—

> "We must not because they make sugar a little cheaper in this country say they ought to be continued,"

And he added some other words I should like to read—

> "If Mr. Chamberlain were able in any fair way to get foreign nations to do away with their bounties we ought to wish him God-speed."

The right hon. Gentleman's destination so far as it depends on the wishes of hon. Gentlemen opposite, seems to be in a rather different direction; but the great majority of the country and of this House do wish him God-speed. It is not only Lord Farrer; there is another authority.

MR. LOUGH: Give us Cobden.

MR. DUKE: I did not catch the hon. Gentleman's remark.

MR. LOUGH: I expected Cobden.

MR. DUKE: I do not know what Mr. Cobden's views on the sugar bounties are, or were, because in his time they had not been invented.

MR. LOUGH : Oh, yes, they had.

MR. DUKE : The hon. Gentleman is not serious. There were advantages given to British refiners who exported sugar. But Cobden was so much a patriotic Englishman that I think he would have taken the line Lord Farrer took in the words I have read. Now I am going to give the hon. Gentleman a more recent authority, on the suggestion that the proposal of the Government would put a burden on the people. The right hon. Member for West Monmouthshire, speaking with his great experience and weight in financial questions, and referring directly to the assumption that this Convention will raise the price of sugar—

> "There are a great many people, and I believe the best judges, who think that that is very doubtful."

The first objection which was raised to the Convention which the Government has entered into, with, of course, the sanction of Parliament, which sanction was given only a few months ago, and which sanction the hon. Member has the courage now to ask the House to revoke, is that the Convention deprives us of some of our freedom of action. I have not the courage to follow the hon. Member in his readiness to recant a pledge of this House taken so recently as November last year. In my view of the matter the credit of a country depends on the sincerity with which it adheres to its pledges. I do not know by what means the common consent of Europe can be brought into operation, and kept in operation, unless by some such conference as that which is to take place under this Act. It is said that we have parted with our independence. For my part I do not believe it. We are no more fettered than an individual is who makes a bargain and feels bound to keep it. The Government of this country is asking this House now to adhere to the decision it came to last November and say we will be content to take sugar at its natural price. What possible hardship is there in that? I believe hon. Members have entirely misunderstood the doctrine of free trade. I have heard a right hon. Gentleman of great experience say that the first principle of free trade was the exchange of commodities at their natural price. Well, under this Bill we are to get sugar at its natural price for five years, and it is the consent to that result which is said to destroy our independence. I do not propose to examine further that part of the matter. It has been said that it is not worth while at this time of day to take any further risks because, as far as England is concerned, the sugar refining industry has been killed. It has also been said that the sugar bounties have practically killed that industry. I sit for a constituency which had a large practical interest in sugar refining, and I should be glad to hear any hon. Member go down to that place and satisfy my constituency that it is better for them that there should not be refineries in their midst. My mind has probably taken a colour from the fact that where I was brought up we had that industry, and we saw it killed before our eyes by this process of bounties. We protested in vain against it, and my constituents, at any rate, are firm, and I hope tolerably unanimous, in the resolve that it is worth while to put an end to bounties. The hon. Member says the refineries are better off now than they were in former times. It is quite true there are two refineries doing a trade greater than sixty refineries once did. But why should the benefit be limited to two refineries? These are not matters for laughter to people in the provinces who have lost their livelihood in the past by the destruction of the refineries. Sugar to the value of £15,000,000 a year is imported into this country. Almost the whole value of sugar is a value in labour. Why should not the labour of our country get its fair share of that £15,000,000? I submit it would be to the public benefit that it should.

The hon. Member for Launceston has taunted the sugar refiners with being incapable, as he taunted the West Indian planters with being lazy. I do not believe the British men of commerce who had their money in refineries were so incapable that they could not conduct that industry on fair conditions. But they have not had a chance. How could they go on in the market with the certainty that when any touch of prosperity comes the system of bounties will be applied in such a way as to kill their industry? Men who have lost their money might look for something better than the taunts and jeers which have been launched against them from speakers on the other side of the House. I invite hon. Members to go to Bristol or Plymouth and repeat these taunts. Then in regard to the West Indies, that which Napoleon could not do to deprive this country of the profit and the honour of the possession of the West Indies, this bounty system has done. It has brought the West Indies to a state of ruin. But there is left the possibility of recovery, and for my part, whatever the political effect and to whatever extent the ignorant may be deceived by the phantom millions of threatened burden, I am grateful to the right hon. Gentleman who has taken up this question. He may not get immediate profit from it, but there will be profit to the State, and sooner or later our people in the West Indies and our sugar growing colonies will find that the heart of the country is warm to them and true, and repudiates the unworthy taunt that they are suffering the penalty of incompetence and laziness. I should like to come to close quarters for one moment with the hon. Members who say that the British consumer receives the bounty, and to give two or three figures which, to my mind, prove conclusively that that statement is incorrect. The cost price of sugar is admitted to be £8 10s. per ton. The value of the bounties is admitted to be about £5 per ton. Sugar can be sold in this country at a profit at £10 or £10 10s. a ton, whether it comes from the West Indies or from Europe. If the British consumer has been receiving the bounty, the price upon cost and profit being £10 10s., the price to the British consumer, deducting the bounty, will be £5 10s. Instead of that, the average price for the past ten years has been £10 10s. I ask whether that does not prove to demonstration that the true effect of bounties has been not to give real advantage in prices, but to introduce now and then for hostile purposes a price so low that there could not be competition, in order subsequently to drive up the price and to recover the difference which had been lost upon the fictitious price of £6 by getting £12, £15, or £25 a ton, and so brought to the pocket of the foreign manufacturer not only his bounty, but any little sacrifice he had incidentally made for the purpose of striking his rival. I have taken up a considerable amount of time, but so much of the discussion, even from this side of the House, having been directed against the proposals of the Government, I hope it may not be thought improper that a Member who takes a distinct view on this subject in favour of the Bill before the House should express it. I hope this Bill will be confirmed by as large a majority as confirmed the Resolution last year.

*Mr. HELME (Lancashire, Lancaster): The policy now before the House has been urged on the ground that it is our national duty to deal with the necessities of those who have suffered in the West Indies. The wider patriotism included in that is not the monopoly of one side of the House. We are prepared to look carefully at the position as it arises, but we cannot agree that only the alteration of the system which has obtained for some time can settle this matter. We have interests at home as well as abroad to consider, and it is right that we should take into account the everyday life of the teeming millions of our people who are dependent for a comfortable daily existence upon a low level of prices for the necessaries of life. We ought, therefore, to look very carefully at the economic arguments which underlie the proposal now before us. This question of the increased cost of living may be a small matter to some people, but when we come face to face with the daily life of the people, and find out what a difference the advance of even ½d. or 1d. makes in the marketing power of the poor, we feel that great efforts should be made to meet the necessities of the West Indies in some other way. Only a few shillings per week can be earned by some of our people; but take the artisan, making 20s. or 25s. a week, subtract the cost of living, and there are but a very few shillings left to provide the clothing and luxuries, if such they can be called, of the family. Upon those few shillings depends the amount which circulates in the home trade of the country, and if you infringe upon them by abstracting a further sum, the home industries of the country must suffer. This scheme of the Government will strike a severe blow at the home trade as it now exists. We have also to remember that the export trade of the country will be affected. The two combined make up the welfare of the whole, and the subsidiary industries which had been developed will be thereby seriously affected. We ought in this House to have every regard for these things. Hitherto we have held the key of our ports with regard to imports to be allowed to enter free; now it is proposed to hand the key over to other people. I think the House of Commons ought to hesitate before it agrees to do so. Our present attitude is challenged, but when raised a few months ago we objected to the proposed policy. We have now a further constitutional opportunity of endeavouring to prevent the consummation of that policy, and it is right that we should use every means in our power to secure to this House only, the maintenance of the control of the conditions under which the food of the people should be permitted to come to these shores, and endeavour to prevent legislation, which we believe to be inimical to the interests of the masses of the people.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): At the commencement of this debate there was an attempt to put forward the contention that the House of Commons was already deeply committed on this subject, and that it would be unusual, almost improper and indecent for us to express an opinion contrary to the Bill now before the House. I think that contention has been pretty well abandoned. The House is entitled to deal as it pleases with this legislation brought forward by the Government, and those of us at any rate who opposed the Resolution at the end of last year are perfectly entitled to make a continuous protest against a policy which we object to from beginning to end. There are three points of view, as it seems to me, from which we may look at this matter. There is the question of the policy involved in this Convention; there is the question of the conduct of the Government in initiating and furthering that policy; and there is the question of the machinery by which it is proposed that the policy should be carried out. The abstract question of the merits or the demerits of bounties is not the question at issue at all. Saving the presence of the hon. Member for Plymouth, no one on this side of the House advocates bounties any more than he does ("Oh, oh"); so that all the warmth which he infused into his speech, and all the charming little insinuations made against us, that we were saying things we did not believe in order to gull our ignorant countrymen, and that we were supporting a system of bounties which was contrary to the free trade principles we profess, were out of place and without foundation. Most people, at any rate, are agreed that bounties are to be deprecated, and the only people whose opinion to that effect I cannot quite understand are those who seek safety in protective duties of any kind. But we are not tainted with that heresy. We regard bounties as a burden to the State which resorts to this method of feeding and fostering industries, as an injury to the domestic consumer in the country where they are imposed, as an unsettling factor in the trade of the world, and as one of the most injurious quack nostrums with which the philosophy of protection has afflicted modern States. But, Sir, we believe that the system carries with it the seeds of its own dissolution, and, whether this be so or not, we do not see that it is any part of our business as a free trade country to interfere to deliver our neighbours from a system which, however injurious we may think it may be to them, is in no sense aimed against us, but which has benefited both the consumer and manufacturer here alike. I claim for this opinion, which is quite contrary to the opinion of the hon. and learned Member for Plymouth, a high authority, for here is what the Prime Minister said no further back than a month ago. On 26th June he said:—

> "If it were not for the fact that in this case the proper investment of capital in the West India Islands, capital belonging to the Empire, was rendered impracticable and dangerous under our existing system, if it was not, in fact, for the case of the West Indies there is no conceivable reason why we should not allow the foreigner to tax himself for the benefit of the British consumer."

Away, therefore, goes the free trade crusading of the hon. and learned Member for Plymouth, which he attributes to the Government. "If it were not," says the Prime Minister, within a month and a few days of this time, "for the case of the West Indies, why should we refuse to receive from foreign countries the advantages they give, even though their own subjects suffer from them?" I think that is a more important contribution to our deliberations to-day than those quotations which we always expect to hear. I think there ought to be a close time for quotations, or a limit of age. I think the right hon. Gentleman the Colonial Secretary will agree with me in that. I quite sympathise with him. There ought to be a limit of age in this case, and I think that Mr. Gladstone and Lord Farrer might now be allowed to rest.

Now, Sir, the preamble of this Convention lays down as desirable two things—first, that the conditions of competition between beet and cane sugar should be equalised, and, second, that the consumption of sugar should be promoted. As to the first of these objects, we are to a very small extent concerned. We are concerned only in the matter of the West India Islands. Let me say we are in the habit of speaking of the West India Islands as being involved in this matter. It is only a small part of the West India Islands. By far the greater part of the West India Islands have either not grown sugar in the past or, finding difficulties and disturbances connected with that trade, have with great ingenuity and enterprise adopted other industries which are making them just as prosperous as the sugar-growing islands are the reverse. And as to our having any interest in securing equality of conditions between beet and cane sugar, I do not know what difference it makes. Do we perform our individual duty in this matter? I had a letter the other day from an intelligent, but unknown, correspondent who said that he did not see the necessity for all this disturbance of fiscal relations and of international arrangements. He said:—

> "I set myself to work to do my part, and I allow nothing but West Indian cane sugar to be consumed in my house."

There is a practical man. I should like to go down the Treasury Bench and see whether there is any rule of that sort in the households of hon. and right hon. Gentlemen. Does the hon. and learned Member for Plymouth give the whole benefit of his custom to the quarter to which it ought to go? The West Indian sugar industry has no doubt suffered severely; but I doubt if it will be benefited at all by this policy, and for this reason—that we have it laid down by the Royal Commission that inquired into the matter that the natural market of the West India Islands is the United States. And look at the effect of this policy upon their interests in the United States. They have hitherto been sheltered by the countervailing duties which the United States imposed against those very bounties; but in so far as the bounties are reduced the countervailing duties will be reduced and the protection to the West Indian producer will suffer.

Sir H. Campbell-Bannerman.

But then, Sir, as to the second object of the Convention — namely, the promotion of the consumption of sugar. It is perfectly absurd so far as our people are concerned. From our point of view this is a proposal for raising the price, restricting the supply, and diminishing the consumption of sugar. Let us consider the initiative taken by this country in imposing this policy on sugar-producing States. It is amazing that the British Government should have been so blind to our real interests as to take the initiative. They have been acting under the influence of some dominant will. I am not going to follow the example of the hon. Member for Oldham in the brilliant speech which he made this afternoon, which raised to a height that they had never yet been placed in, the anticipations that all of us have formed as to his future career. The hon. Member had the courage to dot the i's and cross the t's. I am disposed to be more modest, and I merely say the Government have been, in this matter, under the influence of some dominant will The beginning was made upon India. The Mauritius planters were to be protected in the Indian market, which takes two-thirds of their produce—protected from the bounty-fed sugar of Germany and Austria-Hungary, just as the West Indian planter now is to be protected. What was the lesson to be learned from that experience, which is quite recent? Countervailing duties were advocated on the ground that bounties were ruining the sugar trade of Mauritius. The arguments were identical with those we are familiar with in the case of the West Indies, but there was more force in them, India being, as I have said, the natural market for as much as three-fourths of their sugar. But what has resulted? The last Report of the Government of the Mauritius shows that in the autumn of last year the price of sugar was lower than ever, notwithstanding the fact that India had given a second dose of countervailing duties with a view to meeting the influence of the cartels and indirect subsidies And the Governor, in reporting on the subject, says—

> "The staple industry of the Mauritius is passing through a period of crisis which cannot fail to jeopardise enterprises that do not rest on the staple foundation of adequate capital."

With the failure, the obvious failure, in India, because the object was to raise the price, staring them in the face, this dominant will turned to the European sugar States. Their populations were anxious to get rid of these bounties because they had found how irksome and burdensome they were, and he stimulated their desire, and quickened their action, under the threat of preferential arrangements with our colonies, and succeeded in forming a league pledged to the abolition, or rather to the modification, of the bounties and to penalise sugar from non-contracting countries. I say modification and not the abolition; and here, again, I must criticise the speech of the hon. and learned Member for Plymouth, who spoke as though this Bill and this policy involved an abolition of the bounties. Not at all. On the contrary, while reducing the bounty, it includes a direct recognition and a legitimatising by this country of the surtax, which is a retrograde step for this country, and which yet leaves those bounties that are supposed to be, and are really, so injurious, in full operation. In defending these arrangements, the settled convictions of the dominant spirit of the Government have been impartially displayed, and it is rather amusing and instructive to follow them. In regard to the Continent, they are free traders, advocates of free interchange and of cheapness. They are complete pro-foreigners, the friends of every country but their own. Or, perhaps, it would be fairer to say that they are a sort of free traders, for the final protocol stipulates for the effectual protection of the home markets of the producing countries, and declares this to be one of the objects of the high contracting parties.

Then we turn for light as to the views and motives of the Government to the self-governing colonies. They strenuously advocate their right to give bounties if they please, and they decline to ratify the Convention unless this right of theirs is recognised. So that it is not bounties, it is only *foreign* bounties that are objected to. Then let us proceed to the Crown colonies. There they consent to do away with the bounties, India excepted, which is left to its own freedom. Another feature that rather staggers one in their attitude as reflected in the final protocol is this—that it says that during the continuance of the Convention no preference will be granted in the United Kingdom to colonial sugar as against sugar of the contracting States. What becomes, then, of the attitude of the Government towards the new proposals of the Colonial Secretary that we have heard of? He has told us that the giving of preferential duties to the colonies as against other countries is essential if we are to preserve the British Empire, but here he is himself a party to an instrument by which we renounce the idea of giving any preference in the United Kingdom to colonial sugar as against foreign sugar. If it is the view that the giving of a preference is a good thing, why should it not be extended to sugar as well as to other commodities, and if, on the other hand, the Government renounce it in this instance, why should they be so devoted to it and think it so absolutely essential in regard to other commodities? But, to complete the review of this Protean championship, we have the words of comfort and assurance in which the proposals are commended to the people of this country. If prices go up, it may be to the extent of £5 a ton we were told, the West Indies will be set on their feet and a great Imperial duty will have been performed. But they do not expect now that the price will go up. What, then, becomes of the benefit to the West Indies? Besides this, if these arrangements end in our imposing a duty on any kind of foreign sugar, the Colonial Secretary knows that, quite irrespective of amount, the price of sugar will be raised, because here is what the right hon. Gentleman said only five years ago. He said—

> "To impose any duty on any condition with regard to sugar at the Custom House, to raise questions as to the country of origin,"

the very thing we are undertaking to do here—

> "The bonding, warehousing, and delay would undoubtedly, I am informed on the best authority, impose an extra expense which would be something considerable, and which would have to be taken into consideration in fixing the price of sugar."

And then he goes on to say, a rather surprising sentiment at the present moment—

> "We should avoid, if possible, meddling with a trade of 1,500,000 tons in order to benefit a trade of only one-eighth the amount."

Therefore, if we analyse the advocacy of this Convention, a very strange document and a very strange policy, we find that it is justified on free trade grounds and on protectionist grounds—from a pro-bounty point of view and from an anti-bounty point of view—with the expectation that sugar will rise and with the expectation that it will not rise. The Colonies and India are to be free to accept or reject the Convention. Therefore they are to stand on the line of fiscal independence. But the Government will not, under any circumstances, punish bounty-fed sugar from our colonies, and that is on the line of Imperial fiscal union. And while the self-governing colonies are not to be ostracised if they give bounties the Crown colonies are on no account to receive a preference. Such an *olla-podrida* of arguments, theories, and objects probably never was produced before. I wonder whether these arguments will be submitted to the inquiry which is now in process for the purpose of classification and arrangement. Classification and arrangement would appear to be very much required, and this might be an opportunity.

Preferential treatment, we are told, is the only way of keeping the Empire together, and yet we are now expressly to agree to prohibit it! Our flesh has been made to creep from the terrible and alarming consequences of the dumping development, but the latest Ministerial theory is that the price will not be affected. And then, amid all the talk about tariffs and countervailing duties, comes the intimation that our ports are to be closed against foreign bounty-fed sugar—down comes the portcullis with a bang and a rattle and extinguishes all these fine-drawn theories and paradoxes. The President of the Board of Trade said that the penal clause would be put in force against four countries only. I do not know on what ground he drew the line at four, but four great countries are a very considerable element in themselves, if it does not go beyond four. This is pretty well as a result for a free trade country, and for a country which proclaims to the world its adherence to the doctrine of the open door. As to the method of enforcing this Convention, Article VII. says that the high contracting parties agree to establish a permanent Commission, charged with supervising the execution of the provisions of the Convention. There are eleven delegates, only one of whom is British, and the others represent countries with interests and habits different from ours, and with a different commercial policy—as yet. The Bill provides for a permanent bureau representing this majority of foreign nations. The bureau, like the present Cabinet, is appointed to collect and arrange information, and to classify it, but, unlike the present Cabinet, it is to publish the information affecting the sugar law and practices in different countries. This bureau will tell us which countries we are to punish or taboo, and when we receive the notification of this we must act within two months. His Majesty the King in Council, with all pomp and dignity, must act immediately at the bidding of this bureau in Brussels, or a breach of the treaty ensues! This is what the President of the Board of Trade said gave us legislative and fiscal freedom! Now there can be no objection of principle to any arrangement by which the Powers may decide to co-operate for their mutual benefit, so long as the matter is in the hands of a judicial body of *status* and authority, and provided the terms of reference to it are consistent with the fixed, known, and approved policy of this country. But this tribunal satisfies neither of these provisions. We give practically a blank power of attorney, in the dark, which may lead to mischief-making with other States which we shall be helpless to prevent, a power superior to Parliament in regard to our own fiscal and commercial affairs.

State after State may come forward and complain that we are infringing treaties that we have concluded with them. Russia has done so already. Is it wise for us, who are still free trade, to place this power in the hands of a body representing States preponderatingly protectionist, especially at a time when threats of commercial war are being fulminated? We shall cut a poor figure if we are obliged to allow ourselves to be used at the behest, and it may be for the convenience, of other Powers as the exponent of an obsolete form of commercial practice. Do the proceedings of this bureau, as far as we can follow them, justify confidence? Some of the contracting States have considered that they are not in a condition to comply with the terms of the Convention. The first of these is Austria-Hungary, where there is a contingent law which gives a monoply, practically, of the market to certain bodies. That is held to be inconsistent with the Convention; but, the bureau says, although it is inconsistent with the Convention, yet there probably will be a law passed modifying it before long, and therefore it is not an urgent matter. But surely they are sanguine men who anticipate anything that may be done by the Austrian Reichsrath under present circumstances. Then in France the system of refining is said to be objectionable, and again the matter is held up because it is not urgent. The French Government may modify their plans. What effect will this condition of things have on contracts entered into during the next month or two before the Convention comes into force, and when it is not possible that these Powers can take the necessary steps. Then we have Spain, which has signed, but not ratified, and Sweden, I believe, also. Then Russia has declared that she does not impose anything of the nature of bounties, and it was accordingly dealt with, as we might expect, by the bureau. But, Russia having availed herself of the good offices of Germany, it has been arranged that the matter should be put on this footing, that the United States' countervailing duties should be accepted as the value. The President of the Board of Trade said that after all it did not much matter, because we had no large dealings with Russia, that the sugar imports from Russia were small; but I am informed on very good authority that, although it is true that the direct imports from Russia are less than 1,000 tons, yet at a moderate estimate 100,000 or 150,000 tons of Russian sugar was imported last year from Dantzig and Hamburg, which under the new system will necessarily be classified as Russian sugar. One sees here what ground arises for misunderstandings and friction between the great Powers when this Convention is brought into force. Outside of the West Indian planters, the West Indian Association of London, and the refiners, I do not believe that the Convention has a friend in the country. The interests of the community appear to me to be trifled with in this Convention, a community which requires and ought to have cheap and abundant food. The interests also of great and thriving industries are affected, and that is sufficient ground for our opposition; and, also, why should we give away or compromise our freedom in our own commercial affairs, or place our fiscal and our constitutional rights, as it were, in a Commission—and such a Commission! These considerations, in my opinion, in view of the chaotic state of things among the signatory Powers and the failure of the Commission to carry out the preliminaries of their task, ought to prevail with the House and make it refuse to proceed with this Bill.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: Mr. Speaker, in the speech to which we have just listened there was one sentence which, indeed, I think introduced the only new idea I have heard in the whole course of this debate, and which has for me a singular fascination. The right hon. Gentleman suggested in connection with certain quotations an hon. friend of mine made, I think, from Mr. Gladstone and from Lord Farrer, that there should be in this House, as there is in regard to criminal matters in France, a proscription with regard to such offences, and, as I understood him, that no one should be entitled, without a breach of the Rules and Orders of the House, to quote any other Member of the House with regard to any speech delivered more than ten years ago. The right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the

Opposition is well aware that I am a friend of reciprocity. I can assure him that I will absolutely refrain from ever quoting from any period dating back more than the ten years to which he has referred, if he will pay me a similar compliment. I am afraid that that is the only sentence in the right hon. Gentleman's speech to which I am able to give a cordial assent; and especially I differ from the statement with which he commenced, which was to the effect that the House and the Party opposite would be perfectly justified in refusing their assent to a Convention which has already been ratified. Now, Sir, the right hon. Gentleman has been in office, and very likely will be in office again. What would he do supposing he came into office to-morrow and found this Convention in force? I give him the credit of believing that he would say, "However much we differ from this Convention, however much we doubt its merits, yet, inasmuch as it has been ratified, and ratified after a Resolution of the House of Commons, we are bound to accept it in pursuance of that long tradition which has maintained continuity in our foreign policy;" and I would go further and say that, if he adopted any other course, he would be perpetrating an absolutely unique act in the whole history of British diplomacy, and doing a thing which all foreign countries would be justified in considering an act of bad faith.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: This is not a question of what a Minister would do or would not do. It is a question of what the House of Commons would do. If the House of Commons has to complete this transaction, I claim that the House of Commons has full power over that Bill.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I do not in the least doubt the powers of the House of Commons; and, unlike the right hon. Gentleman, I do not doubt its patriotism and discretion. But I claim that, if there is one thing more established than another in our foreign policy, it is that, right or wrong, a treaty with a foreign Power once ratified shall be observed by the Powers ratifying it. I refuse to believe that the right hon. Gentleman is going now to make any new precedent. Of course, it is quite open to the right hon. Gentleman to take this opportunity of protesting against the Bill, and, so long as he is quite sure he will not be in a majority, he may even vote against it.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: I think the right hon. Gentleman forgets the fact that the ratification was subject to the approval of the House of Commons. What is the meaning, or what is the use of that, unless the House of Commons acts upon it.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: No, Sir; I have not forgotten so elementary a fact as that, and I would point out to the right hon. Gentleman that I think in the time of his own Government a treaty made by them was so far disapproved of by the House of Commons that its ratification was not insisted upon. But here we have taken the opinion of the House of Commons. We took it last year, and we obtained their assent by Resolution. We obtained the assent of the House of Commons, we received the mandate of the House, and we ratified accordingly. The situation, therefore, is as I have stated it. But some of the followers of the right hon. Gentleman used the very far-fetched argument that the Bill we have introduced is not the same Bill we indicated when we took the Resolution of the House of Commons. It was, I think, suggested by the hon. Member for West Islington that, in fact, the present Bill deals with the question of penalising the countries that give bounties by prohibition, whereas we said that we were going to do it by countervailing duties. That is an entire mistake, and not in any way justified by the facts of the case. When we introduced the Resolution we explained that we found ourselves bound by the Convention to introduce legislation giving us power to penalise the non-contracting States found to give bounties. Whether we penalise them by prohibition or by countervailing duties is a matter of choice, and it remains a matter of choice in the Bill we present to-night. In that Bill power is given to the Government to prohibit. It is stated —I forget the exact words—that the object may equally be obtained by some other means, but in that case the further sanction of Parliament will have to be obtained. This is the position. If the Bill passes we shall be able to prohibit. If we do not want to prohibit, and do want to establish countervailing duties, we shall have to come to the House of Commons again for their sanction. Is it not rather curious, and a sign of a certain unreality about this debate, that at this time of day we have had hon. Gentlemen arguing as though, if we had introduced countervailing duties, it would have been a totally different thing, and they might even have supported us. [An HON. MEMBER: No.] That is all very well, but we were told distinctly that prohibition was much worse than countervailing duties by one of the speakers in this debate to-night. The hon. Member for Dundee said he would prefer countervailing duties to prohibition. I do wish for once the Opposition would agree. I beg the Opposition to understand that we, at any rate, diversify our proceedings. We do agree sometimes. But you never agree. What did an even more representative member of the Opposition than the hon. Member for Dundee say on the last occasion? The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Monmouthshire said that all would prefer prohibition to countervailing duties. What I wish to say is that we have reserved a choice. We think prohibition is quite sufficient, and the most convenient form of dealing with the present situation. We believe we shall only have to deal with so infinitesimal a production of sugar that prohibition will be the simplest way of carrying out the obligations, but if it should turn out, owing to some change in the situation, that countervailing duties should appear to us, as to the hon. Member for Dundee, to be more desirable we shall not hesitate to take the opinion of the House of Commons on the question.

Some hon. Members, in the course of this debate, have been much exercised as to another point. I do not think the exact effect of the Convention has been studied, or at all events understood, by all the speakers who have addressed us in this debate. They are exercised as to the position of the contracting States—that is to say, the States that have joined the Convention—and they ask what is the course to be followed supposing Austria-Hungary, for instance, refuses to accept the decision of the Bureau or Commission in regard to its legislation. Many hon. Members appear to think that thereupon we shall be bound at once to prohibit the whole of the Austria-Hungary sugar. Nothing of the kind. They have altogether exaggerated the position of this Commission of inquiry. If the Commission were to report against Austria-Hungary and Austria-Hungary were not to accept their report, then it would be necessary to call a new conference, and in the new conference the new situation would be considered, and it would be perfectly absurd to pronounce beforehand what the result would be. That is the result with regard to all the contracting States—with regard to all those who come into the Convention, and they include all the large exporting States of the world. If any one of them were to break the conditions or withdraw from the Convention, that would involve a new conference. It would be a new circumstance altogether. The business of the Commission, which has been described in the imaginative language of the hon. Member for King's Lynn as a sort of Middle Ages Vehmgericht, with power of life and death over the subjects brought before it, is to decide whether or not a particular State gives a bounty. Hon Members opposite complain that we are only one upon the Commission. But, curiously enough, every other Power is only one. Do they expect that if this business is to be done at all we could have a Commission on which we were in the majority? Our interests are not in any way antagonistic to those of other Powers. ("Oh, oh.") Not in this respect. It is perfectly absurd to say that those other Powers have different interests from ours. All our interests are the same, and they are to see that bounties are not given. It is a question of fact which this Commission has to decide, and the accusation which is made by hon. Gentlemen with reference to this is that ten of the members would dishonestly, and against the facts, and in some recondite interest—I cannot conceive whose, it would certainly not be their own—declare that a particular State gave a bounty when, as a matter of fact, it did not.

But then another point was raised which touches me nearly, because it was again, I think, my hon. friend the Member for King's Lynn who taunted me with having neglected the interests of the colonies—both the self-governing colonies and the

Crown colonies. So far as regards the Crown colonies, we have assented to a provision which for five years binds us to give no preference to these colonies. If he thinks that is a blot in the Bill I am inclined to agree with him. But it was assented to by His Majesty's Government, because we were told that it was only upon those terms that we could obtain what we believed in other respects to be a great advantage—a great act of justice to our colonies. But I hope when the five years expire that clause, at all events, will come up for reconsideration. Then there is the position of the self-governing colonies; and the hon. Member for King's Lynn, who is really so industrious in these matters that it is difficult to believe he can have overlooked the facts in this case, seems to think that the action of the colonies in refusing to join this Convention is a condemnation of the Convention. I should have thought he would have seen that the self-governing colonies could not be expected to join, that they had nothing whatever to gain by joining, and that the interests which have led us to join did not in the slightest degree affect them. We have declared, and made our ratification conditional upon our declaration, that in no circumstances will we penalise our self-governing colonies. In these circumstances, what possible object have they in joining this Convention? So far as it goes it ties their hands to a slight extent. They have no advantage to gain. They decline to join, and nobody in his senses, I imagine, ever expected that they would join.

Another point was raised by the hon. and learned Member for South Shields. He, like several other speakers who preceded him, appears to be in great distress lest some new cartel, some portentous instrument of torture for British subjects in British colonies, should be the result of this Convention: and he bases all that on a telegram he has seen in *The Times*, which states that a number of gentlemen, representative more or less of international sugar industries, met the other day and were unable to come to any conclusion. The hon. and learned Member did not read the telegram quite correctly. He thought they had come to no conclusion; but, as a matter of fact, they found—as every one would imagine they would find—that an international cartel was a much more difficult thing to arrange than a national one, and, so far as my information goes, there is not the slightest probability that they will succeed in their endeavour. But leaving that matter, may I point out to the hon. and learned Member that the power of creating such an international cartel remains precisely the same whether or not this Bill passes? The hon. Gentleman says no, because by the Convention you have excluded a number of competing States. In other words, you have created a monopoly which will, therefore, be much more able to establish a syndicate or trust than if you had left yourself a free market. Again, I make allowance for the impossibility of hon. Gentlemen, who are very busily engaged, acquainting themselves with the details of a very complicated subject. But what is the fact? We have included in this so-called monopoly every exporting State of the slightest importance, and we have every reason to believe that of the States which are outside some will come in. But assuming every one of them remains out then the total exports of the whole of the States remaining out is less than 50,000 tons of sugar, or 1-125th part of the world's produce. How can the power or policy of a syndicate, trust, or monopoly be altered in any way without having regard to the gigantic production of sugar throughout the world? In a business of millions, the only difference is that you exclude 50,000 tons.

Mr. LOUGH: That does not include the United States.

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN: The hon. Gentleman interrupts very freely. As I have a good deal to say he will excuse me if I do not always reply to him. But in this case I will reply to him. The United States does not export at all. Then the hon. and learned Member for South Shields made a reference also to the most-favoured-nation clause. I have no time to discuss the value of the most-favoured-nation clause. But, curiously enough, while hon. Members opposite are reproaching us for submitting our fiscal arrangements to foreign countries, they seem to forget that the most-favoured-nation clause is the clause which allows foreign nations to settle the tariff that shall be imposed on British goods. Yet the hon. and learned Gentleman seems to regard the most-favoured-nation clause as the real stand-by of our British commerce. The hon. and learned Member also said, if I understood him rightly, that the United States accepts the view that the most-favoured-nation clause should be observed in its strictest interpretation, and that it is inconsistent with retaliatory duties. I can only say that if that be the view of the hon. and learned Gentleman it is absolutely, entirely, and profoundly inaccurate.

Mr. ROBSON: I do not desire to interrupt the right hon. Gentleman, especially after what he has said about other interruptions. The United States have always contended that the most-favoured-nation clause is conditional, and we have always contended that it is unconditional. In making that statement—which was the one I did make—I am absolutely and entirely accurate.

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN: Yes, Sir, I am much obliged to the hon. and learned Gentleman. I see I misunderstood what he said. Now that I know what he did say I will answer him. He says that in the past we have maintained the unconditional character of the most-favoured-nation clause. He is quite right in stating that the United States have taken a totally different view. The United States say, in the first place, that it is quite consistent with retaliatory duties against bounties; and when we are threatened with the discontent and dissatisfaction of foreign countries, let it be remembered that the United States have put on retaliatory duties against bounties; and whatever other countries may have thought of it, not a single one of them has taken hostile or serious notice of it. I think therefore we may dismiss altogether the idea that when we have followed the example of the United States we shall raise a hornet's nest about our ears, and that a number of countries with which we are in amicable relations will immediately proceed to take all kinds of retaliatory proceedings against us. Then, in our own case, when India put on retaliatory duties, as she did two or three years age, there again she did so without any retaliation being directed against her by any of the countries of Europe.

Now, Sir, the Bill before the House has been described in most extravagant language by the speakers who are opposed to it. Among a few of the adjectives which have been used, I find "clumsy," "blundering," "ridiculous," "flagitious," and "nefarious." If I may humbly venture to give a piece of advice to those who are opposed to me, I would say that although we are on the eve of a great economic fight it would be well for all of them, whatever view they may take, to keep as cool as possible, and as long as possible; and I should advise my hon. friends on this side of the House, and, if I may say so, my hon. friends on the other, not to exhaust their vocabulary of violent adjectives, and not to turn an economic fight into a personal fight. I am told that all the logic is on their side; let them be content, and do not let them add to it abuse. Now, what is this Bill which has been spoken of in the terms to which I have referred? This Bill has secured, or will secure, for this country what for forty years every economist, every representative man of both Parties, until within the last few years, has considered to be a desirable object to attain, and it will secure it with the least possible recourse to any method which has ever been by any one condemned. There is to be the threat of penalties, but that threat, under the circumstances, with all the chief exporting countries bound under the Convention, is not likely to be put in force except to so insignificant an extent that I do not believe Lord Farrer himself would object to it. That is the object of this Bill, which has been really extravagantly represented by speakers on the other side. That object was the avowed object of everybody who has spoken on the subject up to a very recent period. Now it is said that those who have joined in advocating this Bill, and perhaps I especially, have travelled very widely away from the principles of free trade. That may or may not be the case, but in reference to that I regard this debate as very useful and suggestive; and I venture to submit to right hon. Gentlemen opposite, and some of my hon. friends on this side, that, if we have travelled in any way from the strict orthodoxy to which they profess to belong, they have travelled still further and in an opposite direction. Undoubtedly, I recognise that the gulf between us is widening, and I am not altogether surprised that Lord Rosebery should have said, with reference to this matter, that if there was a division of opinion it would be a diagonal division. I say hon. Members have gone very much farther than the economists whose doctrines they profess to support.

We have heard something in regard to dumping. We had an interesting speech to-day, which has earned an unusual compliment as being paid by the Leader of the Opposition to the Member for Oldham. Regarding that speech, I join in the phrase which the right hon. Gentleman opposite made use of as to its exhaustive, amusing, and instructive character. It was exhaustive, it was amusing, it was instructive! It certainly was exhaustive, for it went, I think, into every detail of this debate, and everything that it touched it adorned. But that was not all. In the same speech my hon. friend, who has complained on many occasions that he is gagged in this House, has apparently so few opportunities of addressing it, and especially in regard to the fiscal question and of the tariff reform —my hon. friend found the opportunity which he desired, and in the course of his speeech he touched on that wider scheme which he attributes to me, but which I do not in the least recognise as my own. I do not recognise, as described by him, my scheme. I really do not know whether to congratulate my hon. friend on the ability of his speech or to condole with him in the painful position in which he finds himself. I remember my hon. friend at the time he came into Parliament, and I did the best I could then to secure his entrance into this Assembly—I remember how, in the heyday of his enthusiasm, he was going to give his ready and cordial support to his own Party, and to his own Government. (An HON. MEMBER: What about yourself—who has changed most? and loud cries of "Order!"] I am not going to bandy words with the hon. Gentleman opposite. I am sorry, but it is clear that all those expectations of my hon. friend have been disappointed. One by one his fond delusions have vanished. First he discovered that the Prime Minister was unworthy of his confidence. Then came the Secretary for War, who was also found unworthy. Next it was the Foreign Secretary; then it was the President of the Board of Trade; and then, after all that—it is with deep regret I have to say it—he came to the Colonial Secretary. But my hon. friend has still one hope—he clings to the Chancellor of the Exchequer. Well, I hope that the confidence of my hon. friend will not be again misplaced; but I warn my right hon. friend not to place too much faith in the valued and continued confidence of my hon. friend. Sir, my hon. friend said that this Bill was a model and an example of the great machinery which hereafter might be introduced to the country. He said that in the sugar bounties—and I agree with him—we have a great champion example of dumping *in excelsis.* I do not know of a better example of unfair competition by dumping below cost price to the detriment of a British industry, than this. Yes, and that is why I hold that this debate is so instructive and so useful. Dumping is good; if it is good for one trade it is good for another. Therefore we come to this—all dumping is good. Very well; I am glad to have something to go upon. A part of the Government inquiry is now concluded. But then we were told that we had come upon a new theory, which was being utilised. But what was the theory? That in an old country like ours, where we have no virgin soil, no untouched mines, the primary industry is expected to give place to more complicated business. Well, whatever any one may say, no one will deny to my hon. friend the pleasure which he will anticipate when he goes to the great centres of industry and expounds his theory. He will go to Bradford, the centre of the woollen trade; to Oldham, in the midst of the cotton industry; he will go to some other place. [Cries of "Birmingham"]—Oh! Birmingham; there the trades and businesses are rather complicated—he will go to Barrow, for instance, a centre of the iron trade; to Belfast, the centre of the linen industry, and, addressing a meeting of the working classes, he will say, let us suppose, "You belong to an old country. Here your primary industries must disappear." [Cries of "No."] "Their place will be taken by more complicated trades, and for you, gentlemen, I am afraid there is but little hope. But never mind, this great Empire will still remain firmly founded and inviolate on jam and pickles." That is the new economic doctrine, irrefragable, my hon. friend says, and triumphant. Well, it may be irrefragable; but I wait for the result of that meeting to which I have referred to know whether it will be triumphant.

I am almost afraid of the suggestion of the right hon. Gentleman the Leader of the Opposition to go back twenty years. Why, twenty years ago there was absolutely no doubt whatever about the evils of dumping, of sugar bounties, and of all bounties. It is true the Leader of the Opposition is a survival from that time, but it is not the case with the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Aberdeen. He said if goods are dumped buy them, that is your business, he could not see that any injury could be done; but my point is that twenty years ago there was absolute and universal concurrence of opinion that bounties ought to be got rid of. Reference has been made to a memorandum written by Lord Farrer, and from this hon. Gentlemen have quoted passages that serve their purpose, and very rightly omit passages that do not serve their purpose. This memorandum states in so many words that the Government advocated abolition by all reasonable means, and the Royal Commission, to which reference has also been made, reported against retaliatory duties, though it should be remembered that the chairman, a gentleman of great colonial experience, reported in the minority against the findings of his colleagues. The Commission was divided; but still I give the Opposition the advantage of the statement that the Royal Commission, with Sir D. Barbour, a great Indian financier, and the right hon. Baronet the Member for Berwic·, were against retaliatory duties. That may be; but all desired the abolition of bounties, and that is where they stopped and the Government stopped in 1881. We were anxious to effect the abolition of the duties, but we were not prepared to take the only step which would secure that abolition. There is a passage I should like to quote from Lord Farrer's memorandum. Among many reasons against retaliatory duties, he says—

> "It may well be doubted whether any threat of retaliatory duties might not have the reverse effect of that expected. Any threat o treat these bounties as subjects for retaliatory duties would lead to the belief that they were specially beneficial to the country granting them and injurious to us, a belief which might strengthen foreign Governments in the desire to maintain them. On the other hand if they recognise that they are favourable to this country at the expense of the foreign country—"

Yes, but that is the point.

> "we are far more likely to induce foreign countries to abolish them."

That is what we have been doing. Acting on this theory, assuming the way to get the abolition of bounties was not to protest against them, but to allow foreign countries to see how foolish we thought them and how injurious they were to them, in the hope of their voluntary abandonment we have gone on for twenty years, but foreign countries have never made the slightest approach to abandonment. They have increased them year by year, and it was only under threat of a policy of retaliation they at once gave in and gave us all we had been struggling for for forty years. Now what did the theory in this paragraph proceed upon? I only refer to it because it has been repeated again and again. It proceeds on the assumption that the foreigner is a fool; it proceeds on the assumption that foreigners do not know what is good for them, that they are proceeding ignorantly in a course which will undoubtedly lead to their ruin, and that if we only wait long enough they will find this out and change their ways. That is not very consistent. When hon. Gentlemen opposite undertake to explain that the bounties have nothing to do with the ruin of refiners or the failure of people in the West Indies, they say that the real explanation is the superior science of foreign countries. It is the Charlottenburg argument. If we can only establish a school in this country like the school in Germany, which has educated all these scientific Germans to such a height that they entirely surpass our own people, then all will be well. But does the science of the French, Germans, and other Powers concerned stop the political economy? Are they so wise in their methods of business, so admirable in their applications of science, and such idiots in regard to the larger considerations of political economy that any one can instruct them better—that the schoolboy can teach them the A B C of the science of which apparently they have not the slightest conception? To my mind that is a ridiculous supposition. I believe the Germans and the French are clever people, and I have an idea that they do understand their interests, and that they do know enough of political economy not to be carried away by all the dogmas which hon. Gentlemen opposite would wish us to accept.

What has been the result of the bounties to Germany, for instance? Has the system ruined Germany? No, it has paid Germany well. What has happened? An enormous development of trade, and not only of the growth of beet, by which hundreds of thousands of people have been employed on the land, but all the trades which are connected with the growth of beet, the machinery trade, the mechanical production of these trades are benefited in like measure. That is the present immediate result of paying the bounties in Germany. I think, therefore, people might find that the Germans are not so foolish as some hon. Gentlemen suppose, and that on the whole they have already done very well. But that is not all. They are looking forward to greater success. What is the ultimate object of a bounty? It is to secure a monopoly. Was the bounty in process of securing a monopoly? Yes, it was. If you look at the Returns you will find that the increase of the importation of sugar into this country from Germany and Austria has been perfectly enormous, and that we were on the rapid road to a condition of things in which Germany and Austria alone, without any international cartel such as that which frightens the hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for South Shields, would have been able to regulate the price of sugar in this country. Do you suppose they would not have taken advantage of that? Do you suppose the working people of this country are such fools as not to know that it would be worth almost any present sacrifice to prevent the creation of a monopoly of which ultimately they will be all victims? That is one reason, and it is a very good reason, why the old economists were opposed to "dumping." But there is another reason. We were reminded in one of the most admirable speeches delivered in the course of the debate this evening by my hon. and learned friend the senior Member for Plymouth of Mr. Gladstone's words, and I say the older economists would have been ashamed of three-quarters of the arguments that have been put forth on the other side of the House. They never sought the interest of the majority, if it involved an injustice to the minority. We have heard a good deal of talk about principle. Justice is a principle. Free trade and the dogmas of free trade are a policy. You may change your policy with the change of circumstances; but principles—such a principle as that of justice—ought to be eternal. Hon. Gentlemen laugh at that. They are new economists, new Liberals. I suppose they would have laughed at Mr. Gladstone speaking from this place as he often did on so many questions. He appealed not to sordid interests, but to the high principle of justice.

Putting justice aside altogether, what is the interest of the community in this matter? I think hon. Gentlemen opposite have thought a great deal more of the Confectioners' Alliance, and of all that may mean, than they have of the interests of the community. We have heard a good deal more of jam during this debate than we have of the working man. The interest of the community, in my opinion, is to have sugar as continuously as possible at the lowest price at which it can be produced without loss. I do not go beyond that. I believe that the abolition of bounties will secure greater stability. Hon. Gentlemen opposite cannot see that. They ask why. I will tell them why. The instability in sugar, the extraordinary variations of price to which they themselves have made reference are due to differences in supply and demand. If you are dependent upon Austria-Hungary and Germany and there came a bad season, and accordingly the beet crop was a failure, there is no limit to the price you would have to pay. Well, what is the remedy for that? More varied sources of supply; to have a supply on which you can depend, from the West Indies, from Java, from all parts of the world. That will tend, at any rate, towards stability of price. At the present moment beet is placed at an unnatural advantage with respect to cane sugar, and we want to re-establish equality, and I believe that that will lead to stability, and in the long run to equality, of price. Our Bill, then, I say, will secure that, and I think that any temporary cheapness with which we have been favoured from time to time will have been very dearly purchased indeed if it is followed by such a monopoly as we can fairly anticipate in any other circumstances. My hon. friend the Member for Exeter taunted my right hon. friend, the President of the Board of Trade with what he called the gift of prophecy, and he recommended, as I understood—I do not think it was quite in good taste—he recommended that he should take this gift to the share market. Well, I think the accusation is unfair, and the suggestion is not kindly. The accusation is unfair because, as far as I know, and I have listened to the whole of this debate, my right hon. friend has made no prophecies at all. He has said that, in his opinion, the average price is not likely to be raised, but as to making a confident prediction, that has been left to hon. Members opposite. They, indeed, have been very free with such prophecy. I think the hon. Member for West Islington predicted that the cost of this Bill would be greater than the cost of the South African War. (Mr. LOUGH: Hear, hear !] Well, that is a good prediction while you are about it. Now, Sir, really let us come to common sense. The removal of the bounty is to raise the price of sugar to such an extent that we shall be involved in an expenditure equal to that of the South African war—that is the proposition. Now, what are the facts, what is the common sense—I call that poetry ? Well, these are the facts. After the signature of the Convention, after it was known that the bounties would be abolished, the average price of sugar for the year after the signature was 25s. 5d. per ton less than the average price before ; and I am told that at the present time in the market you can buy as much sugar as you like after 1st September—after the Convention is in full force—for £9 a ton. In those circumstances it does not seem to me common sense to talk of an addition to the cost of sugar of £5 or £10 or £15 a ton.

I must say one or two words about the different interests concerned. We have heard a great deal, as I have said, about the jam trade. The hon. Member for West Islington gave us really a most picturesque description of the brilliant fortunes of this interest. He told us of the millions that had been expended upon it, of the large fortunes that were being made, and of the numbers of working people who were being employed. Well, I suppose the people who are engaged in these industries and who have spent these millions are what are called capitalists. If so, why is the hon. Gentleman so severe on the sugar capitalists ?

MR. LOUGH : I am not at all severe.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN : I beg pardon ; the hon. Member went on to sneer at Sir Nevile Lubbock, whom he named, and others whom he called sugar capitalists. For the life of me I cannot see that a sugar capitalist is a bit better or a bit worse than a jam capitalist. [Mr. LOUGH : Hear, hear !] Well, so far we are agreed. Well, what is the jam industry ? I am not going to deal with persons, but with industries. The jam industry, which has been spoken of in such dithyrambic language by hon. Gentlemen opposite, is a protected industry of the worst kind—a protected industry according to the hypothesis of hon. Gentlemen opposite. Mind, I am not quite certain that I accept that hypothesis, but according to it the jam industry is a protected industry which could not live unless it could buy sugar below cost price, and that sugar is only provided for it by the bounty system of foreign nations. Now, if I am to compare industries, I say that the West Indian industry, which asks only for free trade and fair trade, is after all more deserving of consideration than the jam industry, which lives on bounties and on the ruin of other trades in this country. But I do not accept the hypothesis. I do not believe that the jam trade is in the slightest danger. I take this as proved. We were told by someone to-night—the hon. Member for Devonport, I think—that there had been during the past fifteen years wild deviations of price in sugar, between 5s. 9d. and 28s. per hundredweight. Well, but if the 5s. 9d., which is the lowest price, is necessary for the jam industry, what did it do when the price was 28s ? The removal of the bounties cannot conceivably make up a mere fraction of the difference between 5s. 9d. and 28s. ; and yet the jam industry has survived that enormous deviation. If, as we believe, the average price of sugar remains about the same, the jam industry has nothing to fear from this legislation. But I go a step further. I ask hon. Members who support the jam industry. What would their clients say if a bounty were put upon foreign jam? It seems to me that, if we had not taken these steps and shown foreign nations that we will not stand bounties, that we will retaliate against them and take all the steps necessary to prevent them, the policy of bounties would have had a great development. I cannot conceive why the Germans, French, and Austrians, who have put on bounties to secure to themselves the sugar industry, which is a primary industry, should not also put on bounties to secure the jam industry, which is a secondary industry. One thing is clear, that if they had done so, according to the arguments which hon. Gentlemen are using, the jam industry would have had no right to complain. They, at any rate, have no call upon us. They repudiate any retaliation against bounties, and if now or hereafter these trades suffer in any degree—and I think it is not impossible that they may suffer—at all events we know that on their own showing no Parliament will be called upon to legislate in their favour.

As to the position of the alternative industry—that of refining. We have had a great deal of technical description from gentlemen not engaged in that industry who profess to be thoroughly acquainted with its course. We have been told that the refining industry is very prosperous. Let us test that. According to the Memorandum from which hon. Gentlemen opposite have been quoting, in 1864 the refinement was 330,000 tons. In 1881 it was 640,000 tons. That is so say, in those 17 years, in which there were no bounties or only insignificant bounties, and during which trade might be said to have taken its normal course, the increase of the refinery interests in this country was proportional to the consumption of sugar. Then the bounties were increased. What has happened since 1881? Between 1881 and 1901 the industry has been practically stationary. The hon. Member for Devonport put it at 540,000 tons.

Mr. KEARLEY: I excluded 120,000 tons of brewers' invert sugar. The quantity is about 650,000 tons.

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN: That does not matter to my argument. I thought the hon. Gentleman deliberately excluded invert sugar as not being relevant.

Mr. ALEXANDER CROSS (Glasgow, Camlachie): The hon. Member must know that invert sugar is not produced at sugar refineries, but by other processes.

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN: For the present argument I am prepared to take any figure which hon. Members agree to give me. I say that while sugar refining in the first seventeen years nearly doubled in amount, in the next twenty years it remained practically stationary. Is that satisfactory? It is a most curious thing—and I call attention to it, because it will come up for frequent discussion hereafter—that hon. Gentlemen opposite seem to be satisfied with a stationary position for industries in this country. They pay no regard whatever to comparative statistics. If we find that other countries have been increasing rapidly while we have remained stationary, the fact that we have not declined is all that can be expected, they say. I differ from them. In the case of sugar refining, while we have been stationary, what has happened in other countries? In 1881 they exported to this country 139,000 tons. In 1901 they exported to this country 919,000 tons, or about seven times as much as in 1881, while our refineries were stationary. Then we are told that under free trade everything is for the best in the best of all possible worlds. What might have been if we had dealt with the refining of this amount of sugar, or of the average increase which had been going on before the growth of bounties. Why, it would have given employment to so many workmen that all the jam, pickles and blacking in the world could not hold their own beside it. What might have been still may be, and still will be, if I rightly judge the opinion of the country.

I now come to the position of the West Indies, and I will deal with it very briefly. The Leader of the Opposition said that they were thriving. Really, it is almost insulting to many of these islands to say that. By hook or by crook, by the help of doles from this House, by the exertions made, some of them were just balancing revenue and expenditure and dragging on a living, it is true; but if the right hon. Gentleman calls that thriving, he has a very moderate view of what prosperity means. I go to the Royal Commission, and here they were unanimous. They pointed out that if everything had been done—and we have done everything that they recommended—and if the production of sugar ceased in the West Indies, the situation would be perilous in the highest degree, and that the islands must go back to barbarism. There is no other employment, no means of obtaining money for exports in the case of many of them. We should have them on our hands, and when hon. Members complain of the doles for which I have been compelled to ask, any Minister representing the colonies when this unfortunate fact occurred would have to come here and ask for millions where I have asked for hundreds of thousands of pounds. The hon. Member for Launceston said it would be better to give £2,000,000 than do this. Will he give the £2,000,000? No, whenever I ask for the most moderate sum it is given by the hon. Member and others in the most grudging way. If they could get the £2,000,000, the hon. Member for Launceston would say it was a temporary expedient, and the Colonial Secretary would have to come again and again to keep the islands alive. It is also said that these islands only supply us with 46,000 tons of sugar. What has that to do with it? They supply this amount because, owing to the peculiar situation of the United States, they can send the greater portion of their produce there with greater advantage. But as soon as the supply of Porto Rico and other places increase, and when the reciprocity treaty with Cuba is concluded, the West Indies will have no market at all except this country. If we had only treated them fairly, there is no earthly reason why they should not have been supplying us with the greater part of our demand. It is nonsense to talk of them as an insignificant part of our supply. These islands are so situated by nature that they are specially capable of growing an admirable and cheap supply of sugar; and if we had only given them fair justice I believe their output at the present time would have been a thousand millions of tons. It is said that there is no advantage to them in this Bill; either you will advance the price of sugar and the working man will suffer, or you will not, and the West Indies will not enjoy any advantage. But there is a third alternative—no increase in the average price of sugar, but the additional stability and certainty which you give to trade will benefit the West Indies. The right hon. Member for the Cambridge University said—

> "When I hear of the failure of an industry I think it is due to want of experience, care, or ability."

The right hon. Gentleman is very hard on those who have failed. I am not certain it is always, in the case of industrial occupations, due to lack of enterprise, care, or ability. It is due more to want of capital and want of security. I speak from experience. During the last eight years I have been trying to induce capitalists to go into this business, but it is perfectly absurd to expect any capitalist to put money into an undertaking in the present state of affairs when he knows that there is an immense bounty which can be expended up to the last farthing in order to ruin his industry.

I have listened in the course of the debate to a good many attacks on myself, and I do mind a little the sneers addressed to me because I am alleged to have a great interest in the colonies. The hon. Member for Oldham said that I cared six times more for British subjects in the colonies than I did for British subjects at home. It seems to me that an Englishman may care for his own immediate country and yet care for the rest of the Empire. I do not think that the government of our colonies will be made easier in future if an idea gets abroad that we who are the governors of the colonies—I mean the House of Commons—are in any way indifferent to their interests. I think that the progress of a community, however small or however large its prosperity, must always be based on community of interest and community of sacrifice. What I believe to be true of districts, of States, or of nations, I believe to be equally true of an Empire, and when I find that any part of the Empire, whether it is a colony or whether it is part of the United Kingdom, suffering from an evident and palpable injustice, I think we ought to remedy that injustice even at some sacrifice to ourselves. Now, Mr. Speaker, I beg to ask the House to agree to the Second Reading of this Bill. I ask them to do so because, in the first place, to reject this Bill would be to perpetrate what would rightly be considered an act of bad faith on the part of this Government; in the second place, because I believe this Bill will secure free trade in sugar and increase the sources of our supply of that most necessary part of the food of the people; and, in the third place, because it will protect us from the possibility of a monopoly and enable us continuously to obtain sugar at a fair price from all the markets of the world. In the last place, I recommend it to this House because I believe it is a tardy act of justice to our own colonies and to a great British industry.

Question put.

The House divided:—Ayes, 224; Noes, 144. (Division List, No. 195.)

AYES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Agnew, Sir Andrew Noel
Allhusen, Aug. Henry Eden
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Atkinson, Right Hon. John
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hn. Sir H.
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bailey, James (*Walworth*)
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (*Man'r*
Balfour, Capt. C. B. (*Hornsey*
Balfour, Rt Hn Gerald W. (*Leeds*
Balfour, Kenneth R. (*Christch.*
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bathurst, Hn. Allen Benjamin
Bignold, Arthur
Bigwood, James
Bill, Charles
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith-
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Bull, William James
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Butcher, John George
Carlile, William Walter
Carson, Rt. Hn. Sir Edward H.
Cavendish, R. F. (*N. Lancs.*)
Cavendish, V. C. W. (*Derbyshire*
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Chamberlain, Rt Hon J (*Birm*
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J A (*Worc*
Chaplin, Rt. Hon. Henry
Chapman, Edward
Charrington, Spencer
Clare, Octavius Leigh
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Chas. Ready
Colston, Chas. Edw H. Athole
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Cook, Sir Frederick Lucas
Corbett, A. Cameron (*Glasg.*)
Corbett, T. L. (*Down, North*)
Craig, Charles Curtis (*Antrim, S*
Cranborne, Viscount
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Cross, Alexander (*Glasgow*)
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Denny, Colonel
Dewar, Sir T. R. (*Tr. Haml'ts*
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dimsdale, Rt. Hn. Sir Joseph C.
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Dorington, Rt. Hon. Sir J. E.
Doughty, George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Duke, Henry Edward
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Dyke, Rt Hon. Sir William Hart
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Faber, E. B. (*Hants, W.*)
Faber, George Denison (*York*)
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson, Rt Hn Sir J. (*Manc'r*
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fitzroy, Hon. Edw. Algernon
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Flower, Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Philip S. (*Warwick, S. W*
Fyler, John Arthur
Garfit, William
Gibbs, Hn. Vicary (*St. Albans*
Godson, Sir Augustus Frederick
Gordon, Hn J E (*Elgin and N'rn*
Gordon, J. (*Londonderry, S.*)
Gordon, Maj Evans (*T'r Haml'ts*
Gore, Hn G. R C. Ormsby- (*Salop*
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Greene, Hy. D. (*Shrewsbury*)
Grenfell, William Henry
Groves, James Grimble
Guthrie, Walter Murray
Hain, Edward
Hall, Edward Marshall
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hamilton, Rt Hn Lord G (*Midd'x*
Hardy, Laurence (*Kent, Ashf d*)
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Haslam, Sir Alfred S.
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heaton, John Henniker
Henderson, Sir A. (*Stafford, W.*)
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Houston, Robert Paterson
Howard, Jno. (*Kent, Faversham*
Hudson, George Bickersteth
Jeffreys, Rt. Hn. Arthur Fred
Jessel, Capt. Herbert Merton
Kennaway, Rt. Hon. Sir J. H.
Kenyon, Hon. G. T. (*Denbigh*
Keswick, William
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (*Glasgow*)
Lawrence, Sir Jos. (*Monm'th*)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (*Liverpool*
Lawson, John Grant (*Yorks. N R*
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N. S.
Llewellyn, Evan Henry
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (*Bristol, S.*
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Francis William
Lowther, Rt. Hon. Jas. (*Kent*)
Lucas, Col. Francis (*Lowestoft*)
Lucas, Reginald J. (*Portsmouth*
Macdona, John Cumming
MacIver, David (*Liverpool*)
M'Arthur, Charles (*Liverpool*)
M'Iver, Sir Lewis (*Edinb'rgh W.*
M'Killop, James (*Stirlingshire*)
Majendie, James A. H.
Massey-Mainwaring, Hon W. F.
Maxwell, Rt Hn Sir H. E (*Wigt'n*
Melville, Beresford Valentine
Middlemore, Jn. Throgmorton
Mitchell, William (*Burnley*)
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
Montagu, G. (*Huntingdon*)
Montagu, Hn. J. Scott (*Hants.*)
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Morgan, D. J. (*Walthamstow*)
Morrell, George Herbert
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Murray, Rt Hn A. Graham (*Bute*
Murray, Charles J. (*Coventry*)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (*Bath*
Nicholson, William Graham

O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
Palmer, Walter (*Salisbury*)
Parker, Sir Gilbert
Parkes, Ebenezer
Percy, Earl
Pierpoint, Robert
Pilkington, Colonel Richard
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Walter R.
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Pym, C. Guy
Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
Ratcliff, R. F.
Rattigan, Sir William Henry
Reid, James (*Greenock*)
Remnant, Jas. Farquharson
Renshaw, Sir Charles Bine
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. C. Thomson
Roberts, Samuel (*Sheffield*)
Robertson, Herbert (*Hackney*)
Rolleston, Sir John F. L.
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Rutherford, John (*Lancashire*)
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford-
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Samuel, Harry S. (*Limehouse*)
Saunderson, Rt. Hn. Col. E. J.
Scott, Sir S. (*Marylebone, W.*)
Seton-Karr, Sir Henry
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Shaw-Stewart, M. H. (*Renfrew*)
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Sinclair, Louis (*Romford*)
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, H C. (*North'mb. Tyneside*
Smith, Jas. Parker (*Lanarks.*)
Smith, Hn. W. F. D. (*Strand*)
Stanley, Lord (*Lancs.*)
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir Jn. M.
Stock, James Henry
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
Talbot, Lord E. (*Chichester*)
Talbot, Rt. Hn. J. G. (*Oxf'd Univ*
Taylor, Austin (*East Toxteth*)
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Thornton, Percy M.
Tollemache, Henry James
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. E. M.
Valentia, Viscount
Vincent, Col Sir C. E. H (*Sheffield*
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt Hon Sir William H.
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Webb, Colonel William George
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wilson, John (*Glasgow*)
Wilson-Todd, Wm. H. (*Yorks.*)
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (*Bath*)
Worsley-Taylor, Henry Wilson
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Allen, Chas. P. (*Glos., Stroud*)
Asher, Alexander
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Asquith, Rt. Hon. Herbt. Hy.
Atherley-Jones, L.
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Bayley, Thomas (*Derbyshire*)
Beaumont, Wentworth C. B.
Beckett, Ernest William
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Bowles, T. G. (*Lynn Regis*)
Brigg, John
Broadhurst, Henry
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Bryce, Right Hon. James
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burns, John
Burt, Thomas
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H
Causton, Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Channing, Francis Allston
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Cremer, William Randal
Crooks, William
Cust, Henry John C.
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, Alfred (*Carmarthen*)
Devlin, Joseph (*Kilkenny, N.*)
Dewar, John A. (*Inverness-sh.*)
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Douglas, Charles M. (*Lanark*)
Duncan, J. Hastings
Dunn, Sir William
Elibank, Master of
Evans, Sir F. H. (*Maidstone*)
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Fenwick, Charles
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (*Leith*
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmund
Flynn, James Christopher
Foster, Sir Walter (*Derby Co.*)
Fuller, J. M. F.
Furness, Sir Christopher
Goddard, Daniel Ford
Gore, Hn. S. F. Ormsby- (*Linc*
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir J. Eldon
Grant, Corrie
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Haldane, Rt. Hon. Richard B.
Harmsworth, R. Leicester
Harwood, George
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-
Hayter, Rt Hon Sir Arthur D.
Helme, Norval Watson
Henderson, Arthur (*Durham*)
Hobhouse, C. E. H. (*Bristol, E.*)
Holland, Sir William Henry
Hope, John Deans (*Fife, West*)
Horniman, Frederick John
Humphreys-Owen, Arthur C.
Jacoby, James Alfred
Joicey, Sir James
Jones, David Brynmor (*Sw'nsea*
Jones, William (*Carnarvonsh.*)
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kemp, Lieut.-Colonel George
Kilbride, Denis
Lambert, George
Lambton, Hon. Fredk. Wm.
Langley, Batty
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (*Cornwall*
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, David
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Laren, Sir Charles Benj.
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Markham, Arthur Basil
Mitchell, Edw. (*Fermanagh, N.*
Morley, Rt. Hn. John (*Montrose*
Moulton, John Fletcher
Newnes, Sir George
Nolan, Col. John P. (*Galway, N.*)
Norman, Henry
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, P. J. (*Tipperary, N.*)
Partington, Oswald
Paulton, James Mellor
Pearson, Sir Weetman D.
Pease, H. Pike (*Darlington*)
Pickard, Benjamin
Price, Robert John
Priestley, Arthur
Rea, Russell
Reid, Sir R. Threshie (*Dumfries*
Rigg, Richard
Roberts, John H. (*Denbighsh.*)
Robson, William Snowdon
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rose, Charles Day
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Samuel, Herbert L. (*Cleveland*
Samuel, S. M. (*Whitechapel*)
Seely, Charles Hilton (*Lincoln*)
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Thomas (*Hawick, B.*)
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (*Forfarshire*)
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Soares, Ernest J.
Spencer, Rt Hn C. R. (*Northants*
Taylor, Theodore C. (*Radcliffe*
Thomas, Sir A. (*Glamorgan, E.*
Thomas, David Alfred (*Merthyr*
Thomas, F. Freeman (*Hastings*)
Thomson, F. W. (*York, W. R.*)
Tomkinson, James
Toulmin, George

Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Ure, Alexander
Vincent, Sir Edgar (*Exeter*)
Walton, J. Lawson (*Leeds, S.*)
Warner, Thos. Courtenay
Wason, Eugene (*Clackmannan*
Wason, John Cathcart (*Orkney*
Weir, James Galloway
White, Luke (*York, E. R.*)
Whiteley, George (*York, W.R*
Whitley, J. H. (*Halifax*)
Wilson, H. J. (*York, W. R.*)
Wilson, John (*Durham, Mid*)
Woodhouse, Sir J T (*Huddersf'd*
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Herbert Gladstone and Mr. William M'Arthur.

Main Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed for Monday next.

PUBLIC BUILDINGS EXPENSES [CONSOLIDATED FUND].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That it is expedient to make further provision for defraying the expenses of the purchase of Land and Buildings, and the construction of Buildings and Works, in connection with certain Public Departments, and to authorise the issue out of the Consolidated Fund of any sums not exceeding in the whole £1,790,000 for such purposes, and to authorise the Treasury to borrow for the purpose of providing money for sums to be issued out of the Consolidated Fund, or for the repayment of sums so issued, by means of Terminable Annuities for such period not exceeding thirty years from the dates of borrowing, such Annuities to be paid out of moneys to be provided by Parliament for the service of the Commissioners of Works, and if those moneys are insufficient, out of the Consolidated Fund."—(*Mr. Elliot.*)

MR. WHITLEY (Halifax) thought the Committee were entitled to a statement from the Secretary to the Treasury, as a sum of even £1,700,000 required some explanation before being granted. It would be greatly to the convenience of Members if such Resolutions as that now before the Committee could be placed on the Paper, as it was impossible, when they were read from the Chair, fully to grasp their nature. He should certainly oppose the Resolution, unless a full statement were made as to the purposes for which this money was required, the buildings to which it was to be allocated, how it stood in relation to sums previously voted for similar purposes, and whether it was the completing sum for the schemes for which it was required.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. ELLIOT, Durham) agreed that it would be more convenient to have the actual Bill under discussion, but the usual procedure of the House of Commons had to be followed. The sum asked for was for supplementing and carrying forward schemes of building which had been authorised for a long time, and which were founded in great part on the Report of the Committee of 1897. The schemes comprised the new War Office Buildings, the Great George Street site, a Science and Art building in Kensington, increased accommodation for the Admiralty, and the addition of a new wing to the British Museum.

MR. DALZIEL (Kirkcaldy Burghs) said the hon. Member had really missed his hon. friend's point. In a proposal of this kind it would assist hon. Members very much if the Resolution had been printed. There were no rules to prevent hon. Members having this notice on the Paper, and if that had been done the Committee would have been saved the exhaustive process of extracting the information which, up to the present, they had not yet obtained. He wished to point out that the Resolution that had been read from the Chair was different from the one on the Notice Paper, therefore they were discussing a Resolution which was not before the Committee, and that was not proper courtesy to the Committee of the House of Commons This was not the period of the session nor the time of day when £1,500,000 should be asked for without a notice being placed upon the Paper. Why was this proposal not brought forward at the beginning of the session, at a period when proper consideration could have been given to it, instead of bringing it in after midnight in the hope that it would be rushed through without discussion? He wished to inform the Government that in regard to all their Bills from now forward that he intended to protest against this mode of procedure.

He wished to know what the original estimate was so far as these public buildings were concerned. There was an estimate when the original proposal was brought forward, and he wished to know whether that estimate had been exceeded. The hon. Member had stated that more offices and land were required, but he never told them whether these were new proposals and they were left to guess. It was not enough to say "Let us have this Bill, and then you can discuss the measure at a later stage." What opportunity were they likely to have to secure an adequate discussion of this Bill? It was their duty upon this and upon every other question brought forward to protest against measures being taken after midnight, more especially when they had no information given them upon which to form a definite judgment. He protested against this sum of money being asked for without any estimate being laid before them.

MR. BUCHANAN (Perthshire, E.) asked if there were other new works which were about to be commenced, and he also wished to know whether there would be a schedule to the Bill which would set out the various sums required.

MR. ELLIOT said there would be a schedule which would enable the hon. Member to see at a glance all the particulars he had asked for. With regard to the introduction of this Resolution all he could say was that he had followed the invariable practice of the House of Commons.

MR. COURTENAY WARNER (Staffordshire, Lichfield) said there were one or two other questions he should like to ask. He understood that some of the items were in future to be put into the ordinary Vote of the year. He thought that in regard to some of those extra items a certain amount might go into the ordinary Estimates. He did not think they ought to pass this Resolution without any reason being given for this excess of expenditure. If this expenditure had been put in the ordinary Estimates it could very easily have been explained, but as it was a new Bill for expenditure on works sanctioned under former Bills surely they ought to know why the previous amounts had proved to be insufficient, and why they were now asked to pass this Resolution. He wished to know why they were going to borrow all this money, and why they were asked to sanction the borrowing of it without any statement as to its necessity. Personally he had a great objection to borrowing a large sum of money instead of paying their way as they went along, and when £1,500,000 was required over and above their ordinary income he thought they ought to have some explanation.

MR. ELLIOT said he thought it would be much more convenient to consider all those points when the schedule and the scheme were before the Committee. Hon. Members could then judge of the propriety of the measures which the Government were taking. He thought this was hardly the place to raise the question of the advisability of putting this expenditure upon the Estimates. That was rather a large question, and he thought hon. Members would agree with him that it would be rather out of place to go into that question now.

MR. WHITLEY asked why it was necessary after midnight, and within two weeks of the end of the session, to introduce a Bill involving the expenditure of £1,790,000. The House of Commons was not being treated properly by the Government when a Bill of this kind was thrown at it after 12 o'clock on a night so near the close of the session. They seemed to think that they had only to come down and ask £5,000,000 or £10,000,000, and that the House should vote it without consideration. Unless the hon. Gentleman explained why the Bill was not introduced two months earlier, it would be the duty of the Committee to carry on the discussion.

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.) said there would be no objection to pass a Resolution for a reasonable sum for schemes already approved by the House, but he understood the hon. Gentleman to suggest that the money was for works they had never heard of before. He thought the Committee ought to have more light in regard to the new schemes.

MR. H. J. WILSON (Yorkshire, W.R., Holmfirth) said there was something more in this than met the eye. They ought to have a clear and definite statement of the purposes for which the money was wanted.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.) said they were only asking leave to bring in the Bill. When the Bill was brought in hon. Members would see whether the money was to be spent properly or not. This was not the stage at which to discuss the details. He could assure the hon. Member that there was no desire to prevent the House from having an opportunity of discussing the matters dealt with in the Bill.

MR. CALDWELL (Lanarkshire, Mid) said this was the proper occasion on which to ask an explanation of the purposes for which the money was to be granted. Once the money was granted they would be told when the Bill was brought forward that they could only deal with the details of the proposed expenditure. He thought that the Government, when they brought forward a Resolution of this kind, should make a statement to the Committee showing the purposes the money was for.

MR. DALZIEL said the Prime Minister had suggested that this was not the proper time to discuss the matter.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: To discuss the details.

MR. DALZIEL said that in the ordinary course of things the Committee, he thought, would agree at once to the Resolution, but they were in peculiar circumstances at present. For the rest of the session the smaller portions of the Government business would be discussed after twelve o'clock. The suggestion of the right hon. Gentleman that this was not a time to discuss the matter was a most extraordinary one. Their protest was that they were asked to pass this money without their knowing what the sum was, whether it was part of an original sum or of the whole of it, or whether it was a new sum, and without their knowing for what particular business the money was wanted. He would advise his hon. friend to take a division on the matter.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) said he thought that there was some reason for the complaint of hon. Members opposite. The Committee ought to have some detailed explanation before they were asked to consent to the voting of such an enormous sum. They believed that the Government was entirely over-expending itself in public offices. If they were going to put all their civil servants in vast palaces in Whitehall, and to buy up the whole of Westminster, they were committing a tremendous mistake. He would suggest to the Secretary to the Treasury that he should accept the Motion for reporting Progress now, and that the hon. Gentleman should issue an explanatory statement showing the total cost of the public offices up to the present moment, and the addition he proposed to make to each office. If he did that he would have no difficulty in getting the Resolution at a subsequent sitting.

MR. ELLIOT said the Government were not departing from the ordinary method of conducting business of this kind. They were only asking leave to bring in the Bill, which would give hon. Members all the information they required, and hon. Members would not be in any way hampered by passing the Resolution.

MR. WHITLEY said he had tried three times to get an answer to his very simple question and failed. Why was this Bill not introduced at a reasonable period of the session? There was nothing in the nature of the Bill that could not have been foreseen three months ago. He thought, therefore, that it was only reasonable that they should enforce their protest, and he begged to move that the Deputy-Chairman report Progress and ask leave to sit again.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. Whitley.*)

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said he would point out to the hon. Gentleman that he was responsible for the business of the House, and not the Secretary to the Treasury. He could only do his best to arrange the business in the most convenient way. The reason why the Bill had not been brought in earlier was that the session had been very fully occupied. Hon. Members might rest assured that until the Bill was passed the Treasury would have no power to spend the money.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 34; Noes, 120. (Division List No. 196.)

AYES.

Allen, Charles P. (*Glouc., Stroud*
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Caldwell, James
Cawley, Frederick
Channing, Francis Allston
Cremer, William Randal
Douglas, Charles M. (*Lanark*)
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-
Hayter, Rt Hon Sir Arthur D.
Helme, Norval Watson
Henderson, Arthur (*Durham*)
Holland, Sir William Henry
Horniman, Frederick John
Jones, Wm. (*Carnarvonshire*)
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Levy, Maurice
Lough, Thomas
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Markham, Arthur Basil
Mitchell, Edw. (*Fermanagh, N.*
Norman, Henry
Rea, Russell
Roberts, John H. (*Denbighs.*)
Roe, Sir Thomas
Shackleton, David James
Shaw, Thomas (*Hawick, B.*)
Soares, Ernest J.
Thomas, David Alfred (*Merthyr*
Warner, Thos. Courtenay T.
White, Luke (*York, E.R.*)
Wilson, H. J. (*York, W. R.*)

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Dalziel and Mr. Whitley.

NOES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Atkinson, Right Hon. John
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hn Sir H.
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (*Manch'r*
Balfour, Rt Hn Gerald W. (*Leeds*
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benjamin
Bignold, Arthur
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Bowles, T. Gibson (*Lynn Regis*
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Campbell, John (*Armagh, S.*)
Cavendish, R. F. (*N. Lancs.*)
Cavendish, V C W (*Derbysh.*)
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J A (*Worc*
Cochrane, Hon. T. H. A. E.
Colomb, Sir John Chas. Ready
Corbett, A. Cameron (*Glasgow*
Corbett, T. L. (*Down, North*)
Craig, Charles Curtis (*Antrim, S.*
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Devlin, Joseph (*Kilkenny, N.*)
Dickson, Charles Scott
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Doughty, George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Faber, Edmund B. (*Hants, W.*)
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Fitzroy, Hon. Edw. Algernon
Forster, Henry William
Foster, P. S. (*Warwick, S.W.*
Fyler, John Arthur
Gordon, J. (*Londonderry, S.*)
Groves, James Grimble
Hamilton, Rt Hn Lord G (*Midd'x*
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
Howard, Jno (*Kent, Faver'hm*
Jessel, Capt. Herbert Merton
Kemp, Lieut.-Colonel George
Kennaway, Rt. Hon. Sir J. H.
Kenyon, Hon. G. T. (*Denbigh*
Keswick, William
Law, Andrew Bonar (*Glasgow*)
Lawson, John Grant (*Yorks, N R*
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N. S.
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (*Bristol, S*
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lucas, Col. Francis (*Lowestoft*)
Lucas, Reginald J. (*Portsmouth*)
Lundon, W.
Macdona, John Cumming
MacIver, David (*Liverpool*)
M'Killop, James (*Stirlingshire*
Majendie, James A. H.
Massey-Mainwaring, Hn. W. F.
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
Montagu, Hon. J. Scott (*Hants.*
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Morgan, David J (*Walthamstow*
Morrell, George Herbert
Mount, William Arthur
Murray, Rt Hn A. Graham (*Bute*
Murray, Chas. J. (*Coventry*)
Nicholson, William Graham
Nolan, Col. John P. (*Galway, N.*
O'Brien, P. J. (*Tipperary, N.*)
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Pease, Herbert Pike (*Darlingt'n*
Percy, Earl
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
Reid, James (*Greenock*)
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. Chas. Thomson
Roberts, Samuel (*Sheffield*)
Robertson, H. (*Hackney*)
Russell, T. W.
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sadler, Col. Saml. Alexander
Saunderson, Rt. Hn Col. Edw. J.
Scott, Sir S. (*Marylebone, W.*)
Seely, Maj J. E. B. (*Isle of Wight*
Simeon, Sir Barrington
Sinclair, Louis (*Romford*)
Smith, Abel H. (*Hertford, East*
Stanley, Lord (*Lancs.*)
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir Jn. M.
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
Talbot, Lord E. (*Chichester*)
Talbot, Rt Hn J. G (*Oxford Univ.*
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Valentia, Viscount
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt. Hn. Sir William H.
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George

TELLERS FOR THE NOES.—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Anstruther.

Original Question again proposed.

MR. SOARES (Devonshire, Barnstaple) said he thought the Committee ought to have some information as to what the additional works referred to were to be. He begged to move the reduction of the Vote by £500,000.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out '£1,790,000,' and insert '£1,290,000.'"—(*Mr. Soares.*)

Question proposed, "That '£1,790,000' stand part of the Question."

MR. COURTENAY WARNER said he thought the simplest plan would be to accept the Motion for the adjournment of the debate, in order to enable further information to be given. It was most important that a clear statement should be made regarding the new works. New sites were apparently to be bought; but the Committee were not informed where they were to be. He would support his hon. friend's Motion.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 116; Noes, 26. (Division List No. 197.)

AYES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Anson, Sir William Reyne
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Aubrey-Fletcher, Rt. Hn. Sir H.
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (*Man'r*
Balfour, Rt. Hn. G. W. (*Leeds*
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benj.
Bignold, Arthur
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Bowles, T. Gibson (*Lynn Regis*)
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Campbell, John (*Armagh, S.*)
Cavendish, R. F. (*N. Lancs.*)
Cavendish, V. C. W. (*Derbysh.*)
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Chamberlain, Rt Hn. J. A (*Worc*
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Colomb, Sir John Charles Ready
Corbett, A. Cameron (*Glasgow*)
Corbett, T. L. (*Down, North*)
Craig, Chas. Curtis (*Antrim, S.*
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Dalrymple, Sir Charles
Davenport, William Bromley
Dickson, Charles Scott
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Doughty, George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers
Doxford, Sir Wm. Theodore
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Elliot, Hn. A. Ralph Douglas
Faber, E. B. (*Hants, W.*)
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Finch, Rt. Hn. George H.
Fitzroy, Hon. Edw. Algernon
Forster, Henry William
Foster, P. S. (*Warwick, S. W.*
Fyler, John Arthur
Gordon, J. (*Londonderry, S.*)
Groves, James Grimble
Hamilton, Rt Hn Lord G (*Midd'x*
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
Howard, John (*Kent Faver'h'm*
Jessel, Capt. Herbert Merton
Kemp, Lieut.-Colonel George
Kenyon, Hon. G. T. (*Denbigh*
Keswick, William
Law, Andrew Bonar (*Glasgow*)
Lawson, John Grant (*Yorks, N. R*
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N. S.
Long, Rt. Hn. W. (*Bristol, S.*)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lucas, Col. Francis (*Lowestoft*)
Lucas, Reg'ld J. (*Portsmouth*)
Lundon, W.
Macdona, John Cumming
MacIver, David (*Liverpool*)
M'Killop, James (*Stirlingshire*
Majendie, James A. H.
Massey-Mainwaring, Hn. W. F.
Mitchell, Edw. (*Fermanagh, N.*
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
Montagu, Hn. J. Scott (*Hants*
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Morgan, David J (*Wal'hamst'w*
Morrell, George Herbert
Mount, William Arthur
Murray, Rt Hn A. Graham (*Bute*
Murray, Charles J. (*Coventry*)
Nicholson, William Graham
Nolan, Col. John P. (*Galway, N.*
O'Brien, P. J. (*Tipperary, N.*)
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Pease, H. Pike (*Darlington*)
Percy, Earl
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
Redmond, William (*Clare*)
Reid, James (*Greenock*)
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. C. Thomson
Roberts, Samuel (*Sheffield*)
Robertson, Herbert (*Hackney*
Russell, T. W.
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Saunderson, Rt. Hn. Col. E. J.
Scott, Sir S. (*Marylebone, W.*)
Seely, Maj. J. E. B. (*Isle of Wight*
Sinclair, Louis (*Romford*)
Smith, Abel H. (*Hertford, East*)
Stanley, Lord (*Lancs.*)
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Sturt, Hon. Humphrey Napier
Talbot, Lord E. (*Chichester*)
Talbot, Rt Hn. J. G (*Oxford Univ*
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Valentia, Viscount
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt. Hn. Sir William H
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George

TELLERS FOR THE AYES.—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Allen, Charles P. (*Glouc., Stroud*
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Caldwell, James
Cawley, Frederick
Channing, Francis Allston
Cremer, William Randal
Dalziel, James Henry
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Chas. Seale-
Hayter, Rt. Hon. Sir Arthur D.
Helme, Norval Watson
Horniman, Frederick John
Jones, William (*Carnarvonsh.*)
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leigh, Sir Joseph

Levy, Maurice
Lough, Thomas
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Rea, Russell
Roberts, John H. (*Denbighs.*)
Roe, Sir Thomas
Shaw, Thomas (*Hawick, B.*)
Thomas, David A. (*Merthyr*)
White, Luke (*York, E. R.*)
Whitley, J. H. (*Halifax*)
Wilson, H. J. (*York, W. R.*)

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Soares and Mr. Warner.

Original Question again proposed.

MR. WHITLEY suggested that if the Prime Minister would agree that one stage of the Bill, either the Second Reading or the Committee, should be taken before midnight, the opposition to the present stage would then be withdrawn. Considering the amount of money involved he thought that was not an unreasonable request.

MR. DALZIEL concurred with the suggestion, and said he thought that such an arrangement would tend to facilitate the subsequent stages of the Bill.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR said that no doubt a considerable sum of money was asked for in this matter, and if it was distinctly understood that on other stages there should be no prolonged discussion he would endeavour to arrange for the Committee stage of the Bill to be commenced before twelve o'clock.

Original Question put, and agreed to.

Resolution to be reported to-morrow.

IRELAND DEVELOPMENT GRANT BILL.

[SECOND READING].

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.) reminded the Chief Secretary that on a former occasion when the subject of the Development Grant was under consideration Irish Members expressed their dissatisfaction with the Bill as it stood and their anxiety that an opportunity should be afforded for discussing from time to time the allocation of this money. As the Bill stood the representatives of Ireland would have no effective voice in the matter. He hoped the Chief Secretary, who on the occasion referred to said he was desirous of meeting the wishes of hon. Members in this respect, would now be able to state in what manner he proposed to give the opportunity desired. Whatever method was adopted, however, care should be taken to render it impossible for the sum to which Ireland was entitled to be in any year diminished.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) said he understood that his right hon. friend the Chief Secretary for Ireland intended to put this sum on the Estimates in the future, and take it off the Consolidated Fund. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would give the House that assurance, and in that case he would not move his Amendment.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. WYNDHAM, Dover) said that during the discussion upon a former stage of this Bill there appeared to be a very general assent to the suggestion that Ireland should get now forthwith and for ever what was considered to be due to her in respect of the money allocated in England for education. The right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Monmouth himself assented to that proposition, viz., that Ireland should get £185,000. The changes which he intended to propose in Committee would not alter that, and the unexpended balances due to Ireland would remain untouched and unimpaired, and the purposes for which the money taken under the Bill was allocated would appear year by year on the Estimates. In that way Parliament would secure the control of the various items and would be afforded an opportunity of criticising them.

MR. DOOGAN (Tyrone, E.) suggested that the right hon. Gentleman should put the word "Primary" before the word "Education." He thought that the balance left of what had been ear-marked for the Land Bill ought to be devoted to primary education, and he trusted the right hon. Gentleman would give the House that assurance.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.) asked if the money allocated would be spent before it was placed on the Votes.

Mr. WYNDHAM said that it would be put on the Votes before it was allocated and spent. He would not be able to spend any money in future in this respect without bringing in a supplementary estimate.

Mr. CHARLES CRAIG (Antrim, S.) asked if the right hon. Gentleman would give some assurance that a portion of this money would be spent upon the draining of the Bann.

Colonel NOLAN (Galway, N.) said there were a good many other places in Ireland which required to be drained as well as the Bann. He happened to know something about the Bann, and he should say it was the last place in Ireland that ought to be drained.

Mr. CALDWELL (Lanarkshire, Mid) said he understood that the sum granted to Ireland would be equivalent to the sum granted to England for education. He wished to point out that the sum granted to England was an increasing amount, while the sum granted to Ireland was fixed. He wished to know if the equivalent granted to Ireland would increase in proportion to the sum granted to this country.

Mr. WYNDHAM said the point put by the hon. Member for Mid-Lanark was discussed when the Resolution was considered. In proposing the grant which had been fixed he thought he had made the best bargain he could for Ireland. The changes which were to be introduced into this Bill were going to be inserted in order that a section of opinion in this House should have an opportunity of expressing their view upon the rival merits of certain schemes. He hoped hon. Members would excuse him from going further into those details at the present moment.

Bill read a second time, and committed for Friday.

BANKERS' (IRELAND) ACT REPEAL BILL.

Order for resuming Adjourned Debate on Second Reading [1st July] read, and discharged:—Bill withdrawn.

JUSTICES OF THE PEACE BILL [LORDS.]

Order for Second Reading read, and discharged:—Bill withdrawn.

POLICE SUPERANNUATION BILL.

Order for Second Reading read, and discharged:—Bill withdrawn.

BISHOPRIC OF BRISTOL BILL [LORDS.]

Order for Second Reading read, and discharged:—Bill withdrawn.

ELECTRIC LIGHTING (LONDON) BILL. [LORDS.]

Order for Second Reading read, and discharged:—Bill withdrawn.

POOR LAW (DISSOLUTION OF SCHOOL DISTRICTS AND ADJUSTMENTS) BILL.

On the order to go into Committee on this Bill,

Mr. DALZIEL (Kirkcaldy Burghs) said that although there was nothing very contentious in this Bill, he thought the Government should be satisfied with the business already done to-night, and that the House should now adjourn. The Bill had just been circulated, and Members had not yet had an opportunity of reading it.

The PRESIDENT of the LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. Walter Long, Bristol, S.) said the Bill was introduced in the interest of certain Unions which at present were heavily charged, and wished to be relieved of the charge. He hoped the hon. Member would not press his objection.

Mr. DALZIEL said he would allow the Bill to go through on the understanding that the right hon. Gentleman would not put it down again for a couple of days.

Bill considered in Committee, and reported, without Amendment; to be read the third time upon Monday next.

Whereupon, in pursuance of the Order of the House of the 28th day of July, Mr. Speaker adjourned the House without Question put.

Adjourned at twenty-five minutes before Two o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Thursday, 30th July, 1903.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

North Metropolitan Electric Power Supply Bill [H.L.]. Report from the Committee of Selection, That the Lord Lamington be proposed to the House as a member of the Select Committee on the said Bill in the place of the Earl of Denbigh, read and agreed to.

Exeter Corporation Bill [H.L.]. Commons Amendments considered and agreed to.

Hainault Forest Bill. The King's Consent signified; and Bill reported, with Amendments.

North Metropolitan Electric Power Supply Bill [H.L.]. Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments.

London County Council (Tramways and Improvements) Bill; London County Council (Money) Bill; South Shields Corporation Bill. Read 3^{a}, with the Amendments, and passed, and returned to the Commons.

Perth Corporation (Tramways) Order Confirmation Bill [H.L.]; Aberdeen Corporation (Tramways) Order Confirmation Bill [H.L.]; Pentillie Estate Bill [H.L.]. Returned from the Commons agreed to.

Tramways Orders Confirmation (No. 1) Bill [H.L.]; Tramways Orders Confirmation (No. 2) Bill [H.L.]; Manchester Southern Tramways Bill [H.L.]. Returned from the Commons agreed to, with Amendments.

Barry Railway Bill [H.L.]; Dewsbury, Batley, and Birstal Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Worthing Corporation Tramways Bill [H.L.]. Returned from the Commons agreed to, with Amendments; the said Amendments considered, and agreed to.

Great Northern, Piccadilly, and Brompton Railway (Various Powers) Bill; London County Council (General Powers) Bill; London, Tilbury, and Southend Railway Bill; Watford and Edgware Railway Bill; Harrow Road and Paddington Tramways Bill; London United Tramways Bill. Returned from the Commons, with the Amendments agreed to.

Birmingham Corporation Bill (H.L.). Commons' Amendments considered, and agreed to.

Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 8) Bill. Read 3^{a} (according to Order), and passed.

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 5) Bill; Metropolitan Police Provisional Order Bill. House in Committee (according to Order); Bills reported without Amendment; Standing Committee negatived; and Bills to be read 3^{a} to-morrow.

BECKENHAM URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL BILL.

[THIRD READING.]

Bill read 3a (according to order).

LORD TWEEDMOUTH: My Lords, this is rather a bulky Bill, and I am afraid that my Amendment looks rather big on paper; but I think I can in a comparatively few words state the case to your Lordships. The case is one which I hope will commend itself to you, and one in which I think your Lordships will do well to review the decision of the Committee. This Bill is an omnibus Bill, and, amongst other things, it contains a quantity of tramway clauses. The Beckenham Urban Council under this Bill is given power to construct three tramways, altogether amounting to about two miles in length. Tramway No. 1 is about one mile in length, and to that we have nothing to say. Tramway No. 2 is about three-quarters of a mile in length, and runs from Thesiger Road along the Kent House Road to the county boundary between Kent and London. Then comes Tramway No. 3, which is a short piece of about 280 yards, which also runs from the county boundary along Kent House Road to its junction with the Sydenham Road, and it is with regard to this tramway that the difficulty arises. I think it is worth remarking that the Beckenham Urban Council propose to hand these tramways over under lease to the British Electric Traction Company to work, but it is

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

curious that it is specially stipulated in the Bill that the Beckenham Urban Council should not be bound to construct Tramway No. 2 at all unless an arrangement is arrived at with regard to Tramway No. 3, which lies outside their territory, but within the territory of the London county. I think that very clearly shows that the advisers of the Beckenham Urban Council and of the British Electric Traction Company were well aware that there would probably be difficulties with regard to this short piece of tramway lying within the London county, and that they were prepared for Parliament to take a hostile view with regard to the powers sought in respect of that particular piece of tramway.

These 280 yards of tramway lie entirely outside the territory of Kent and of the Beckenham Urban Council. The road authority there is the Lewisham Borough Council, and the tramway authority the London County Council, and there is absolutely no precedent whatever for one of the tramway authorities surrounding the London county carrying a tramway into London county territory without the consent of, or arrangement with, the London County Council as the tramway authority. Since the existence of the London County Council, namely, since 1889, there have been only three cases in which these powers have been sought and given—I refer to the cases of the London United Tramways Company at Hammersmith, a tramway projected by the Bexley Urban District Council in 1901, and a tramway projected by the Erith Urban District Council in the present session. But in all those three cases special arrangements were made in the Bills by which the rights of the London County Council were acknowledged and saved. The Erith Tramway case came before the very same Committee that had to deal with this Bill in the House of Commons, and in that case the Committee decided that the Erith Council should not be at liberty to construct the tramway in the London county without the consent of the London County Council, and of the Woolwich Borough Council as the road authority. With regard to the other two cases—the Hammersmith tramway and the Bexley tramway—special provisions were made, and my Amendment proposes to introduce the conditions made in 1901 with regard to the Bexley tramway into this Bill, those conditions being that the London County Council should have the right, in the course of the next two years, to construct this piece of tramway, and that if they did not use that power, then the Urban Council should have the right to go on with the work as proposed under the Bill.

Lord Tweedmouth.

I think there can be no question as to the correctness of my case so far as precedent is concerned. There is absolutely no precedent whatever for power being given to one of the smaller tramway authorities to invade the London county without the consent of the London County Council, or without some definite arrangement with that body. I shall probably be told that this tramway No. 3 affects a very small bit of the county of London, but that is a very dangerous sort of proposition to admit. After all, little though it may be, it is just as much an infringement of the principle as if a larger area were effected. The London County Council has not shown itself in the least obstructive in regard to this matter. It offered to undertake, if necessary, the construction of the line, or to buy it from the District Council when constructed, and to lease it on the terms which have been put forward by the Highways Committee. I quite admit that in this particular case the tramway is but a short piece. I admit that it is in the interests of the people of the district that it should be connected with Tramway No. 2; that, indeed, it is almost necessary for the purpose of Tramway No. 2 that these 280 yards of tramway should be constructed from the county boundary up to the Sydenham Road in order to complete the connection. The London County Council are perfectly willing to agree to this, and are only desirous of having its rights saved in the manner adopted in all previous cases. If this piece of tramway is to be worked within our territory, it ought to be constructed by our leave, or, if we so desire it, constructed in such a manner and on such conditions as we think proper to impose. I do not think I need labour the point. I have stated the case shortly, and, I hope, clearly, and I trust your Lordships will give me your support in securing the insertion into this Bill of the clause which stands in my name on the Paper.

I should have preferred, if it had not been for the late period of the session, to have moved that the Bill be re-committed; but I recognise that it is too late for such a course to be adopted now. I therefore beg to move my Amendment.

Amendment moved—

"In Clause 18, page 19, line 38, at the end of the clause, to insert the following proviso: 'Provided also, that notwithstanding anything in this Act contained, the Council shall not construct the said Tramway No. 3 if the London County Council shall, in either of the sessions of 1904 or 1905, obtain powers to construct a tramway between the same points as the said Tramway No. 3, and shall proceed to construct and complete the same as soon as possible after obtaining such powers, and on the completion and opening of the same for public traffic by the London County Council all powers for the construction of the said Tramway No. 3, by this Act given to the Council, shall absolutely cease and determine: Provided always that if the said London County Council shall not, before the thirtieth day of November one thousand nine hundred and four, have given notice of their intention to apply in either of the said sessions for such powers as aforesaid, or having given notice of such intention shall not proceed with the promotion of a Bill or Order, or shall, before the said thirtieth day of November one thousand nine hundred and four, have informed the Council by notice in writing that they do not intend to construct such a tramway, then from and after the said thirtieth day of November one thousand nine hundred and four, or the abandonment of the said Bill or Order, or the receipt of such notice as last aforesaid (as the case may be), the powers by this Act conferred upon the Council of constructing the said Tramway No. 3 shall, notwithstanding anything in the foregoing proviso contained, be exerciseable by the Council.'"—(*Lord Tweedmouth.*)

THE CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES (The Earl of MORLEY): My Lords, my noble friend has asked the House to reverse a decision that was deliberately arrived at by the Committee to which this Bill was referred. I do not think I need go into the particulars of the Bill, because my noble friend has very clearly and very fairly put them before you. The Urban District Council of Beckenham has in this Bill asked leave to construct a series of tramways, one of which—tramway No. 2—is on its own ground, but would be practically useless without this little addition of 280 yards which goes into the territory of the London County Council. There is no question about the Standing Orders not having been complied with in this case in every particular. The proper consents were given to the construction of the tramway according to the Standing not Orders, and, so far as I can see, no absolute principle is infringed except the principle that my noble friend has set up, that under no case is any neighbouring local authority to invade the district of the London County Council. I quite agree with my noble friend, that one should be very jealous of interfering with the tramway authority of so important a body as the London County Council, but it is not a principle that applies in other parts of the country. There are many cases in which local authorities construct tramways, with the two-thirds consent of the districts through which they pass, into the districts of other local authorities. The London County Council have no tramways for a very long distance within the reach of these 280 yards, and even if they had they would have to obtain the consent of the Lewisham Borough Council before they could construct the tramway which they ask leave to construct under this proposed clause. I do not think I need labour the question, but I would point out what our Standing Order is which deals with this matter. The Standing Order is No. 133, and it provides that—

"No power shall be given to any local authority to construct . . . . . . any tramway beyond the limit of the district . . . . unless a Committee on the Bill shall determine that, having regard to the special local circumstances, such construction, acquisition, taking, or working ought to be sanctioned."

Therefore, under our Standing Orders it is perfectly open to the Committee to which the Bill is referred to consider any local circumstances connected with the case. This case was entirely before them. The London County Council was heard, and I cannot help thinking that without hearing the evidence as it was given before the Committee, it would be scarcely right of your Lordships to upset a decision deliberately arrived at after hearing both sides of the case. On those grounds I venture to hope that the House will not depart from the decision which has been arrived at by the Committee upstairs.

*LORD MONKSWELL: My Lords, I think the Noble Earl the Lord Chairman of Committees is mistaken when he says that there have been many cases where, contrary to the views of the local authority, their territory has been allowed to be invaded by another authority. I am told that in no single case has that been so. Tramways outside the districts of the promoting local authorities have been invaded in many cases, but my information is that in all cases it has been done by argument with the local authorities of the districts invaded. Therefore this Bill would absolutely throw to the wind the precedent that has been established in these cases. Never has even a larger local authority been allowed to invade the territory of a smaller authority, and yet here we have a smaller local authority allowed to invade the territory of a larger authority. I am sorry the noble Earl the Lord Chairman has taken the view he has on this question.

LORD TWEEDMOUTH: After the speech of the noble Earl the Lord Chairman of Committees I know perfectly well, that it is useless for me to put the House to the trouble of dividing, but I do wish to enter a very distinct protest against the decision of the Committee, and I also wish to put it very distinctly on record that that protest is solemnly entered by the London County Council, against the principle of the invasion of its territory by an outside tramway authority. I also protest that this particular case, though it may be excusable on the ground of the very small nature of the tramway, must not be accepted as a precedent for Committees to go upon in the future.

Amendment, by leave of the House, withdrawn.

*LORD STANHOPE: My Lords, I have an Amendment to omit Clause 40 of this Bill. That Clause was inserted on the application of the Crystal Palace District Gas Company, and it is to this effect: that if it can be proved that any damage is done to the gas pipes of that Company by electrical action the Urban District Council of Beckenham shall be made liable for such damage. The Clause was inserted in your Lordships' House upstairs without the promoters being asked to give any evidence, and I think I can show that the clause is really unnecessary. The great objection to the insertion of this clause is that it vitiates an agreement which has been made with the Electric Traction Company, who were to carry out these tramways. The clause puts an obligation which already exists in another clause in the Bill, but presents it in such a way that it vitiates to a great degree the agreement entered into with the Electric Traction Company. The clause is wholly unnecessary because Clause 35 of the Bill is the model clause, which was agreed to after full consideration by a Joint Committee of both Houses under the Chairmanship of my noble friend Viscount Cross. This clause enacts the making of regulations by the Board of Trade, which really protect all gas, water, and other pipes affected by electrical action. The Crystal Palace Gas Company have asked that Clause 40 should be inserted for their protection, but there is no special protection under this Clause for the Vauxhall Water Company's pipes. They are, of course, protected by Clause 35, and I contend that the special protection given to the Crystal Palace Gas Company in Clause 40 is quite unnecessary in view of Clause 35, and contrary to all precedent. I therefore hope the House will agree to the omission of Clause 40.

Amendment moved—

"To leave out Clause 40."—(*Earl Stanhope.*)

*THE EARL OF MORLEY: My Lords, I regret very much that my noble friend, the Duke of Bedford, who was Chairman of the Committee to which this Bill was referred, is not in his place, because he would no doubt have replied to my noble friend. I feel some difficulty about this matter. I am very unwilling to support an Amendment which would seem in any way to go against a decision of a Committee of your Lordships' House, but after what my noble friend has said, I am somewhat inclined to think that the noble Duke and his colleagues had not before them the full circumstances of the case when they were induced to insert this clause on behalf of the Crystal Palace Gas Company. It is a question of some importance and a matter of principle. The clause provides protection for an individual company against the dangers of electrolysis. Prior to 1893 there was a great deal of difficulty in traction Bills in dealing with the different companies and different bodies who had pipes or wires likely to be affected by electrical action. So difficult did this become that Parliament appointed a Joint Committee in 1893, over which Viscount Cross presided, the result of which was that a model clause was framed which subjected all these companies to the Board of Trade regulations, and that clause has from that time, I think, hardly ever been varied. One of the sub-clauses of that clause is that the electrical power shall be used only in accordance with the Board of Trade regulations, and such regulations shall be made for preventing fusion or injurious electrolytic action on gas and water pipes. The result of that has been that that general principle has been adopted in all legislation, with very few exceptions. Where companies have come for individual protection it has almost invariably been refused to them on the ground that the Board of Trade regulations, if they were properly carried into effect, were sufficient to protect them, and that if they were not sufficient the proper course would be for the Board of Trade to render their regulations more stringent. As far as precedents go, from 1897 to 1900 four special clauses were applied for and all refused. There was one case—the London County Council Tramways in 1900—where a clause of a somewhat similar character was allowed; and in a Sheffield Bill in 1901 there was also a clause allowed, but the circumstances were so peculiar that I do not think it ought to be taken as a precedent. The year before last two clauses were refused, and in no case was one granted, and this year it has been refused in one case, allowed in one, and it is in this Bill. I should further say that the Board of Trade, in the Orders which they issue for the construction of tramways, have invariably refused to give this protective clause to individual companies or persons. They say the companies must rely on the general clause which is given to all companies and in all Bills, and that if the Board of Trade regulations are not sufficient they must be strengthened. I believe there has been one case recently in which it is supposed—I cannot state anything definitely to your Lordships because I have not gone into the matter—that electrolytic action has been proved to have damaged water pipes, but I am informed by the Board of Trade that, so far as they know, the present regulations are sufficient to deal with this matter. Therefore, I venture to think that in allowing this clause to be inserted in the Bill the Committee hardly considered the general principle that was involved, and that it would be a misfortune if in these Bills there crept in a clause of this kind affecting individual companies and persons. On those grounds I feel I cannot possibly resist the Motion which has been moved by the noble Earl.

LORD KINNAIRD: My Lords, the noble Earl has stated that in one case to which he referred the circumstances were peculiar, and that such a clause as the one in question was justifiable on that account. Possibly there was a similar reason for the Committee inserting the clause in this Bill. I have no doubt that the noble Duke who presided over this Committee and his colleagues weighed the evidence carefully and fully considered the points put before them, and is it not possible that the Committee inserted this protection because they recognised special circumstances which rendered it necessary? I am informed that there are other instances which are now being investigated, not only of water, but of gas pipes being injured, and that lately there was a serious explosion owing to a pipe having been moved without the knowledge of the undertakers, and if it had been a large main the damage might have been serious. I think it is rather hard to delete this clause to-day, when those who support it have not had sufficient time to prepare the case against the deletion of a provision which has evidently been inserted in the Bill for their protection after due evidence. This is a question of principle, and I submit that it is a matter for delay. I have not had time to go into it, or to ascertain whether the companies have duplicate mains or not, or whether the inconvenience to the public would be very serious in the event of an accident, and I suggest that the matter should be deferred, so that the Board of Trade might make more inquiry before the Crystal Palace Gas Company is deprived of the protection given them in this clause.

LORD WOLVERTON: My Lords, I am, of course, unacquainted with the local circumstances in this matter, but as, by the regulations of the House, the noble Earl the Lord Chairman of Committees is unable to speak again, I have to say, on behalf of the Board of Trade, that up to the present there is no evidence that the Board of Trade regulations have proved ineffective. The Board of Trade are watching the matter, and if future regulations are considered necessary they will be introduced.

On question, Amendment agreed to.

Bill passed, and returned to the Commons.

RETURNS, REPORTS, &c.

TRANSVAAL.

Despatch from the Governor of the Transvaal respecting the position of British Indians in that Colony.

CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION.

Forty-seventh Report of His Majesty's Civil Service Commissioners; with Appendix.

VOLUNTEER RIFLE RANGES.

Statement showing the allotment of the £170,000, provided in the Military Works Loan (Head 3 Sub-head 2), for the purpose of assisting Volunteers in connection with expenditure on rifle ranges.

CHARITABLE DONATIONS AND BEQUESTS (IRELAND)

Fifty-eighth annual Report of the Commissioners.

POST-OFFICE.

Forty-ninth Report of the Postmaster-General.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

LUNACY.

Return to the Lord Chancellor of the number of visits made, and the number of patients seen by the several Commissioners in Lunacy during the six months ended the 30th June, 1903.

GRENADA.

Regulations for providing gratuities to prisoners on their discharge from prison.

BANKRUPTCY.

Twentieth General Annual Report by the Board of Trade, under Section 131 of the Bankruptcy Act, 1883.

COMPANIES (WINDING UP).

Twelfth General Annual Report by the Board of Trade, under Section 29 of the Companies (Winding-up) Act, 1890.

GREENWICH HOSPITAL AND TRAVERS' FOUNDATION.

Statement of the estimated income and expenditure of Greenwich Hospital and of Travers' Foundation, for the year 1903-1904.

SUPERANNUATION.

Treasury Minute, dated 10th July, 1903, granting a retired allowance to Alfred Flood Bakers, a second division clerk in the Savings Bank Department of the General Post Office, under Section 2 of the Superannuation Act.

LONDON CORPORATION.

Annual accounts of the Chamberlain of London.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

LICENSING ACTS (SCOTLAND) CONSOLIDATION AND AMENDMENT BILL.

[SECOND READING.]

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Lord BALFOUR of BURLEIGH): My Lords, I think perhaps the wisest thing that I can do will be at once to relieve your Lordships' minds of any apprehension that I propose to make a speech of a length at all commensurate with that of the Bill which I am about to ask your Lordships to read a second time. There are, as any of your Lordships who have taken the Bill in your hands will see, somewhat more than a hundred clauses, but they are not by any means new matter. The Government announced in the Gracious Speech from the Throne that they proposed to deal during the present session both with the Amendment and with the Consolidation of the Licensing Laws of Scotland. An Amending Bill was introduced into another place, and also a Consolidation Bill. Both Bills were read a second time and referred to the Standing Committee, and at the conclusion of the proceedings of that Committee, which sat for some weeks considering the Amending Bill, the results of their labours upon that Bill were transferred by general consent to the Consolidation Bill, which then went through its subsequent stages in the House in the form in which it is now presented to your Lordships.

This Bill, therefore, not only amends but consolidates the licensing law of Scotland. It consolidates the whole of the legislation regarding licensing which has been passed as affecting Scotland from the years 1828 to 1901—a period of more than 60 years. During that period there were passed twelve or fourteen public Acts, and a good many private Acts which had penalties of their own, and they are all now reduced to one harmonious whole; and if this measure passes through Parliament, as I have every confidence it will do, before the end of the session, anyone who wants to study any matter respecting the law of licensing in Scotland will not have to do more than read this measure. I think I am entitled to say that this is a highly creditable and useful piece of work, and one which will tend greatly to the convenience of those who have to deal with these matters in the future.

As I do not anticipate any opposition to the Second Reading of the Bill, I shall pass very lightly over most of its provisions, and only touch upon the most important and the new matters which are suggested for legislation to the House. I am sure your Lordships will see that the Bill is presented in a convenient form, because the parts which are new and the parts which are old are distinctly marked, the new parts being marked with thick black lines, so that your Lordships may rely with confidence that anything which is not so marked is already the law of the land. The Bill, then, is divided into seven parts. The first part deals with the question of the new authorities which it is proposed to set up for licensing purposes. I suppose everybody connected with Scotland knows that at the present time there is a licensing court for every county, and in some cases for divisions of counties, and that every Royal burgh has its licensing court of its own, consisting of the magistrates of the burgh. There is an appeal to Quarter Sessions in the case of counties, and to Quarter Sessions of counties in the case of burghs, the large cities having an appeal to their own Quarter Sessions. Very general dissatisfaction has been felt for many years in regard to the constitution of these authorities or, as they are described in the Bill, courts.

In some of the counties of large size the courts have grown by the increase in the number of justices to such an extensive number that all sense of personal responsibility is lost, and in some of the larger counties there have been courts assembled for what after all is largely a judicial as well as an administrative purpose, numbering ninety or over a hundred members; and there has been a great deal of canvassing and solicitation. It is perfectly notorious that in many cases large numbers of the members of the court appear, having been whipped up by one side or the other, and that as soon as special cases in which they are interested are decided they go away. We have, I hope, successfully made an effort to reform that state of matters. In the future there will be a separate licensing court for every burgh over 7,000 in population, whether Royal or Parliamentary, but the existing Royal burghs which are over 4,000 in population will, as a concession to a sort of, perhaps, vested interest, retain their own court, and in all those cases the court will be the magistrates of the burgh. There are now about eighty Royal burghs with courts of their own. About half of those are below 4,000 in population. There are 118 police burghs, and to these licensing courts of their own will be given whenever they are above 7,000 in population.

I think nobody defends the existing state of matters. It is perfectly absurd that a burgh with 348 population should have a licensing court of its own, when a police burgh of 82,000 is still under the control of the county justices. The burghs, I have no doubt—in fact I know quite well—would have desired that all the Parliamentary burghs and all the police burghs should have courts of their own given them, but if that had been done it would have made about 250 different licensing courts in Scotland, one for every three or four parishes, it may be said, and that, I am perfectly certain, would not have tended to wise administration, and is not seriously proposed by anyone. Although this proposal has caused a certain amount of opposition on the part of those burghs from whom licensing authorities are taken away, I think I am entitled to say that it has been very maturely considered, and both the majority and the minority of the Licensing Commission, which sat under the presidency of Viscount Peel, recommended that no burgh which was under 7,000 in population should have a licensing court of its own. That, my Lords, was the recommendation which we first adopted, and which we put into the Bill as we laid it on the Table of Parliament. But, as I have said, as a concession to feeling, and in the hope of modifying the opposition to the proposal which we then made, we have gone down to a population of 4,000 for Royal burghs which now have licensing courts, and allowed them to retain in those cases their own courts of first instance.

So far as the counties are concerned, every county or district of a county will have a licensing court of its own. The court will consist half of county councillors and half of justices, and will vary in number from eight or nine in the case of the smallest courts to twenty-one or twenty-two in the case of the larger ones. Where the county or district contains any Royal or Parliamentary burgh under 4,000, magistrates from such burghs will be added to the court in the population ratio. I hope by this means that we shall do away with most, if not all, of the existing difficulties, that there will be introduced a sense of personal responsibility which I am afraid is too often absent at the present time; that we shall get the maximum of local knowledge which those resident in these places will have, and at the same time that those very small communities will have their local bias and local feeling corrected by a certain admixture of those who live, not within their borders, but in the immediate neighbourhood.

We provide also for a new system of Appeal Courts. There will be a separate Appeal Court for each burgh or city above 20,000 in population. It will consist half of magistrates and half of justices of the county or of the city, as the case may be. All burghs in each county between 7,000 and 20,000 in population will have an Appeal Court of their own, and in that case the Court will be constituted half of magistrates and half of justices of the peace; and each county, whether divided into districts or not, including all the burghs under 7,000, will have an Appeal Court of its own. The idea is to have as few different policies as may be. We think it advantageous that the largest possible area should be brought under the control of the Appeal Court, so that the decisions in regard to licensing in that area may be as uniform as possible. The second part of the Bill consolidates all the existing provisions as to the power and duties of licensing courts, and confers certain new powers, the most important of which will be found in the forty-first Clause of the Bill and are concerned with the making of by-laws for certain purposes which are there specified.

The third part of the Bill consolidates all the provisions as to Excise licences, and it also contains a new provision of some importance concerning the forfeiture of Excise licences when the holders are guilty of shebeening or hawking liquors without certificates. The fourth part of the Bill consolidates the law as to offences and penalties for various forms of drunkenness and breaches of the licensing system This, I think, will be a great improvement, because many of the larger towns and cities have passed special Acts of their own, defining their own special offences, and decreeing certain penalties, each differing from the other, in regard to them. By this Bill, if it passes, they will all be consolidated into one whole, and the penalties will be uniform over the whole country. Amongst other things, in this part of the Bill a certain measure of liquor which has been the subject of a good deal of conflict and discussion in Scotland is now legalised. It is known as a "schooner." I do not know if many of your Lordships connected with Scotland know how much is contained in a schooner. As a matter of fact, a schooner is two-thirds of an imperial pint. The Home-Drummond Act prevented the sale of any liquor above half-a-pint in anything except imperial measures. I understand that the special thirst in Glasgow requires more than half a pint to slake it, but that it is not necessary to purchase a whole pint, and, therefore, with the economy peculiar to the race this half-way house, so to speak, has been devised. It is undoubtedly illegal at the present time to sell two-thirds of a pint, but if a man wants rather more than half a-pint why should he be forced to buy a whole pint if two-thirds will satisfy him? Therefore, by general consent, it is proposed that it shall no longer be illegal to sell this particular measure of two-thirds of a pint.

This part of the Bill also adopts the English provision forbidding the sale of liquor to children under the age of 16. It restricts Sunday sale except to lodgers and to *bonâ fide* travellers for their own consumption. The law with regard to *bonâ fide* travellers differs from the law of England in this respect, that there is no distance charter. In each case the distance which a man must have travelled is considered as a question of fact for the court which hears the case. I think that is more logical, and, at any rate, no serious proposal has been made to alter the law in that respect in Scotland and make it the same as the English law. But one unfortunate decision was given some time ago—at least a decision in my opinion unfortunate—that a *bonâ fide* traveller when he has travelled a certain distance was entitled to purchase, not only for his own consumption, but for the consumption of any of his friends, whether they had travelled or not, as much liquor as he liked. We propose to do away with that and to make it clear that the *bonâ fide* traveller shall be entitled to purchase only for his own personal consumption.

Another clause in this part of the Bill forbids sale from vans except where the liquor has been previously ordered or booked. A custom has grown up for grocers' vans to hawk liquor about, and this has been productive of much evil and will be abolished by the unanimous consent of everybody who has the interest of the population at heart. Clause 76 makes an important consolidation of the various general and local provisions, a matter which I have already mentioned. Clause 72 provides for a Black List on principles analogous to those provided in the Act of last year for England, but with some differences. We propose that when any fourth conviction for an offence scheduled under the Inebriates Act has taken place within twelve months, a person so convicted may be put on the Black List without further procedure. Another clause makes habitual drunkenness, either of husband or wife, a ground for judicial separation; and another clause forbids excisable liquor from being consumed in unlicensed refreshment houses during the hours when the public-houses are closed.

The fifth part of the Bill deals with the difficult and complicated subject of the registration of clubs. That is a matter which was also dealt with in the English Act of last year, but the evils which have grown up in Scotland are, I am sorry to say, much more serious and more deep-seated, and much worse in every way than anything which is known in England. The club of the humbler strata of population is hardly known in Scotland as a social resort. It may be said, without fear of contradiction, that in practically every case where a club has been formed in any of the large towns or cities in Scotland for those below the artisan class, it has been formed solely and only for the purpose of encouraging drinking, for getting drink at times when the public-houses and hotels are closed, and generally for purposes which are not defensible. The number of these institutions has been rapidly growing. I have had complaints from every town and city of importance, and no matter has been made the subject of so much public discussion in Scotland as the best means of regulating this class of institution. It has gone to this length, that many of them in Edinburgh and Glasgow, in Dundee and Aberdeen and other places, have actually their agents upon the streets on Sunday for the purpose of touting for customers for the clubs, and in one case it was proved before the Courts that a large number of people had been taken into one of these institutions, and the only colourable defence that could be made for their being taken in and given drink was that they were friends of the waiter, who had treated them.

The provisions we are making are for the registration of clubs upon application by those institutions. Before a club can be registered at all a certificate in form of one of the schedules of the Bill must be produced, signed by two justices and magistrates, and by the owner of the premises. This certificate must certify that the club is to be conducted as a *bonâ fide* club, and not mainly for the sale of excisable liquors, and the club rules must comply with the provisions of Clause 80. All clubs of all social classes will have to come under this provision, but if your Lordships look at that clause, you will see, I think, that there is nothing in any one of the rules with which every well-ordered club does not already comply. I need not, I think, do more than refer to that clause, because it is in plain language and will tell its own story. A registered club may be struck off the register, as provided in Clause 85, by the sheriff in respect of conviction before the Sheriff's Court or the Burgh Magistrates' Court if that club or any of its managers have broken the law. The sixth part of the Bill deals with legal proceedings, and really does nothing more than consolidate the present law, with such changes of phraseology as are made necessary by the passing of the Summary Jurisdiction Act. The seventh part of the Bill contains definitions, and there are schedules for the forms of the certificate and so on.

There is, perhaps, one matter to which I should specially allude. Your Lordships know that on recent occasions we have had more than one discussion here as to the limitation of the power of the magistrates of the larger cities to close public-houses and other similar places within their bounds at 10 o'clock at night. It is worth while, perhaps, and this is almost the last topic to which I shall think it necessary to allude, to go somewhat closely into the history of this matter, because in proposing the Bill in the form in which it is now brought before the House, I am asking the House to reverse a decision to which it came in 1887, and also to alter a decision which, at my own instance, it came to last year. The history of the matter is this. By the Act of 1865 a power is given to the licensing court of any district to fix other hours for opening and closing in any particular locality than 8 and 11. In 1872 the magistrates of Rothesay sought, under this provision, to close all the inns and public-houses in that town by drawing a line which included all the inns and public-houses in the burgh, and to say that the area so included was a particular locality in the sense of the statute. The Court of Session decided that such a course was not authorised by the law, and ordered the magistrates to revert to the original hours. That decision was given in 1874, and no further advantage was taken of the provisions of that Act until the spring of 1902, when the magistrates of Glasgow and Dundee resolved to delimit certain areas in Glasgow and Dundee respectively as being particular localities in the sense of the Act, and to fix the hour of closing at ten o'clock instead of eleven, for inns, hotels, and public-houses. That case was taken on appeal to the Court of Session, but it was decided that the locality was fairly delimited, and the decision of the magistrates practically stood. The result is, therefore, that in particular localities magistrates can, in every burgh, define particular areas for early closing.

An Act was passed in 1887 allowing every burgh, with the exception of four or five exempted burghs, to close their public-houses at ten o'clock, and your Lordships will recollect that the exemption in the matter of the larger cities was inserted by this House. Last year the noble Earl opposite, the Earl of Camperdown, introduced a Bill to reverse that decision, and to give the magistrates of those larger cities the same power as was hitherto enjoyed by the smaller communities. Last year I opposed that Bill, and your Lordships may perhaps remember that I opposed it mainly upon two grounds. First, on the ground that if it were carried into effect and the magistrates did so close the public-houses, it would be impossible in the existing state of the law with regard to clubs to avoid a still further and greater increase of bogus institutions of that kind, in which case the last state of matters would be worse than the first. If this Bill passes into law that argument will no longer have any weight. The second main ground of objection which I offered was upon a consideration that in these larger cities there were more people arriving and departing, and that life generally was later, and that the same law ought not to be applied to these larger communities as was applied to the smaller ones. The great argument against me at that time was that although that was true as far as the centres of these cities were concerned, it did not apply to the outlying districts, and that it was hard that there should be no power to close in those districts at an earlier hour if desired. The force of the second argument which I used will, as I think your Lordships will see, be largely taken away by the decision of the Court of Session last year, given subsequently to the time when I was speaking, that it is at present competent for the magistrates of these larger cities to delimit areas in their towns without treating the area under their jurisdiction as a whole.

Although I still remain of opinion that there is no case as yet made out for closing the whole of the public-houses within such communities as those of which I am especially speaking, I think it better not to adhere to the view I previously expressed, but to give way to the practically unanimous opinion of those who were concerned with this Bill in another place, and allow the provisions of the Act of 1887 with regard to the larger towns to be repealed. There may be some matters which it may be necessary to discuss in Committee, but I think I have gone over all the points which it is necessary to call attention to at this stage. I put this measure before you as a substantial instalment of temperance reform. I am perfectly well aware that it will not do all that everybody wants to do. I do not believe that it is possible, or ever will be possible, to carry out some, at any rate, of the proposals which are glibly made by those who have not to carry them into effect. I would point out, however—and I think it is an important point—that eighteen out of twenty-nine suggestions contained in the Majority Report of Viscount Peel's Commission are embodied in this Bill. Of the Minority Report we take twenty-one out of thirty-two. Many of those, of course, are the same recommendations, but I think I may say broadly, and without fear of contradiction, that we have practically embodied in this measure every provision upon which both the Majority and the Minority Report agree. There are one or two which we have not taken, but I think I may say that we have gone in this matter as far as enlightened and wise public opinion will allow us to go at the present time. If we cannot, as I know perfectly well we cannot, make men sober by Act of Parliament, at any rate we are doing much in this Bill to take temptation out of the way of those in whose way it is at present placed, and, while I think we do not interfere unduly with individual liberty, we are doing a great deal which, I believe, will make for the formation of public opinion in favour of sound temperance principles. While we penalise that trader who makes it a large part of his business to avoid keeping the law, we do not hamper those who desire legitimately to carry on what we regard as a necessary business. I believe those who have studied the discussions on this Bill will bear me out when I say that on the whole it has been well received, that it is in accordance with public opinion, and that not only the amendment of the law which we now propose, but the consolidation of all the statutes which we now bring together, will prove of great, and, I hope, if it passes into law, of lasting benefit to the country in whose interests it is put before the House.

Moved that the Bill be now read 2ª—(*Lord Balfour of Burleigh.*)

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN: My Lords, the subject of Scottish licensing is a very important one, and the Bill which is before the House is, as your Lordships will have seen, of very considerable dimensions. I am happy to think that the discussion of this Bill is not likely to bear any proportion to its size. The reason for this is that the Bill, like many Scottish Bills, has been very fully considered by the Government with the aid of the Scottish Members in the other House, and the result is a Bill which I concur with the noble Lord in thinking is a satisfactory one. It goes as far as all reasonable persons would think possible at the present time, and I hope with him that it will produce a very good effect when it comes into operation in Scotland. I therefore only propose to trouble your Lordships with a very few remarks, at all events at this stage of the Bill. I would say, in the first place, that I agree with the noble Lord that the consolidation of all the licensing Acts in this Bill is a step which will prove of great advantage to the country to which the Bill applies, and I also think, with him, that it confers very great credit upon the permanent staff who have been occupied in what must have been a very laborious work.

I think that the licensing authority, as it stands in the Bill, is a very satisfactory one. I am speaking chiefly of the counties. I think that the proportion of one-half of elected members of the County or Burgh Councils, and the other half of justices of the peace in the burgh or the county is, perhaps, the best solution of that question which could have been adopted. As your Lordships will remember, in England two-thirds were to be justices, and one-third elected members of the County Council; but when the English Bill was under discussion I never attached too much importance to that point, because, after all, the very same class of persons are justices of the peace as are elected on the County Councils, and the difference really is one much more of words than of reality. With regard to the Court of Appeal, I have nothing to say against its constitution, except in one small particular, namely, where the smaller burghs have a Court of Appeal in common with the counties. Those small burghs, I know, are very anxious to have licensing authorities of their own. In that I am afraid I cannot agree, and, indeed, I think that the Government have already gone rather too far in the concession they have made by departing from the limit of a population of 7,000 and allowing Royal and Parliamentary burghs with a population of 4,000 to remain separate areas. As a matter of principle, I think it is undesirable that a licensing area should be too small, and except for some stronger reason than that of sentiment I think it is not desirable to create these small islands in the midst of large licensing areas. So far as I can see, no separate representation, and no special representation, is given to the small burghs in the country with regard to the Court of Appeal. It is a matter on which they have made representations themselves, and I think, although I have no brief at all to speak on their behalf and have no special preference for them, it is a matter on which they have some claim to consideration. If the noble Lord could see his way between this and the Committee stage to consider that point, I should be glad. I would much rather that he should propose an Amendment in that direction than that it should be done by myself or any other private member of your Lordships' House.

The most important part of the Bill to my mind is that which deals with grocers' licences. I entertain the notion very strongly, and I think those of your Lordships who know Scotland well must agree with me, that grocers' licences and the way this business is worked in Scotland do the greatest evil at the present time. In Scotland villages are few and far between, and the cottages are scattered about, and are usually adjacent to the farm-houses. The consequence is that the population is very scattered, and although there may be no public-houses within miles, you will find as a rule that those sparsely populated country districts are more regularly served with liquors through the agency of the grocers' carts than perhaps any other part of the kingdom, and I am very glad that stringent regulations are made in this Bill on that point. It is provided that in the first place the liquor is only to be taken in carts when it has been ordered, that a book is to be carried by the man who delivers it containing the orders and the name of the person to whom the liquor has been delivered, and there is also to be kept in the grocer's shop a corresponding book, both of which books will be accessible to the police. I hope that this Bill may be successful in dealing with what is undoubtedly a very great evil at the present time. If it proves an unsuccessful means, we must try to find some more effectual means of dealing with it, but in the meantime the proposal in the Bill seems to me as practicable and as sensible a proposal as could be made, and I have no doubt that the County Councils will endeavour to work it in the best way they can.

I really think that it is hardly necessary for me to address any more remarks to your Lordships on points on which I agree with the Bill. I think that the Bill is a very good and a very sensible one so far as I can judge, and I would merely, in conclusion, make one remark to the point on which the noble Lord touched at the end of his speech. I refer to the power conferred upon the municipalities of the seven large towns which were previously exempted, of closing at any time between ten and eleven o'clock, which is a power that has been possessed for some time by all other muncipalities. I am very glad indeed to find that the Government have adopted a different attitude from that which they adopted last year towards this proposal. I am also glad my noble friend Lord Wemyss is not present, because if he had been I do not know what he would have said with regard to their backsliding. But the proposal which the Government are now making is, I believe, a sensible one and the right one. I never could understand why there was any less reason to trust the councils of large towns than the councils of small ones. Unless it is evident that the public sense is in favour of closing at an earlier hour, I cannot see any reason why the council of a large town should be more anxious to act against the wishes of the majority than a small council. I do not quite agree with the noble Lord in the reasons which he gave for this change of attitude. He said that the Courts had now decided that it was in the power of these municipalities to close any districts in their area, but I contend that they had that power for years; there never has been any doubt of it as far as I know. The only instance in which the case came into Court was when Rothesay proposed to divide its whole area into four or six districts, and to close the public-houses in each of those districts. The Court in that case decided that the whole area could not be dealt with in that way under the Act, but with regard to the power of closing in a district, that power has for many years been in force. I am glad that the Bill has been introduced, and I hope that it will pass into law.

THE EARL OF ABERDEEN: My Lords, the noble Lord in charge of the Bill stated that he considered this a practical instalment of temperance legislation, and I have no doubt that the House will feel that that declaration is amply justified. It is certainly a matter for congratulation that the noble Lord has succeeded in so ably dealing with this difficult subject. If the Bill dealt only with that important subject of clubs which my noble friend referred to, it would certainly be a public benefit. The fact that the beverage chiefly consumed in Scotland is spirits as compared with ale, which is more common in England, makes the abuse in regard to grocers' licences particularly easy in Scotland. Personally, I would gladly have seen something further done in this direction. The Bill deals with the sale of liquor by means of grocers' carts, but there is often an abuse without the use of the travelling carts. I refer to the custom of selling spirits in bottles, which are taken by a group of persons, and the spirits consumed, not technically on the premises, but at the door, so to speak, of the establishment where the liquor is purchased. I think the Bill in some other respects might have gone further. My noble friend Lord Camperdown remarked that the Government in the other House had the assistance of the Scottish Members. No doubt the Scottish Members showed the keenest interest in the subject, and proposed many Amendments; but, unfortunately, some of the Amendments which were submitted by the Scottish Members in Committee were not supported by the Government, and are not embodied in the Bill as it is brought up to us. I shall certainly in Committee bring forward some at least of the Amendments which were suggested in the House of Commons. I am glad that my noble relative has included in this Bill the provision enabling public-houses to be closed at an earlier hour in the large towns, which have hitherto been exempted. Although I think the Bill might have gone further, it is an excellent measure, and I trust that it will pass and will pave the way for even further steps in the same direction.

On Question, Bill read 2^a and committed to a Committee of the whole House on Tuesday next.

PUBLIC OFFICES (DUBLIN) BILL.

House in Committee (according to order). Bill reported without Amendment. Standing Committee negatived; Bill to be read 3^a to-morrow.

MILITARY LANDS BILL.

Amendment reported (according to order) and Bill to be read 3^a to-morrow.

LIGHT RAILWAYS BILL [H.L.]

Read 3^a (according to order). An Amendment (Privilege) made. Bill passed, and sent to the Commons.

LONDON EDUCATION BILL.

House in Committee (according to Order).

[The Earl of MORLEY in the Chair.]

Clause 1 agreed to.

Clause 2:

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (THE MARQUESS of LONDONDERRY): My Lords, the Amendments standing in my name to this clause are really drafting Amendments, without which it is thought that the clause might not be workable. I therefore move them without further explanation, but if any noble Lord thinks it necessary to ask any Question upon them, I need hardly say that I shall be very glad to reply.

Drafting Amendments agreed to.

*LORD REAY moved an Amendment, the object of which was to leave the determination of the composition of the bodies of managers in the case of provided schools to the London County Council instead of to the metropolitan boroughs, as arranged under the clause. He said that the object of his Amendment was to give to the County Council the same power which the County Councils in the country had under the principal Act. In the principal Act the number of managers and the grouping of the schools was left entirely in the hands of the County Council, and it seemed to him that so important a matter as the decision with regard to the number of managers and the grouping of schools should be in the hands of the authority which, as had been constantly asserted by the Government, was the authority which had supreme control. He did not understand why this departure from the principal Act had been adopted in this Bill, and why it was proposed to give to the metropolitan boroughs powers with regard to the number of managers and grouping which had not been given to similar authorities in the country. It seemed to him a pure waste of administrative power to introduce bodies which hitherto had had no connection with education, which had no experience in the administration of education, and some of whom at least had expressed a distinct wish not to be entrusted with these powers. The County Council, of course, would have inspectors and officials cognisant of the wants of the various districts, but the metropolitan Borough Councils would have no machinery whatever, and he could not see that any good result would be obtained by introducing this entirely new feature in the administration of the Act, and in deviating from what had been adopted last year by Parliament with regard to the schools all over the country.

Amendment moved—

> "In page 1, line 13, to leave out from the word 'by' to the first 'the' in line 14."—(*Lord Reay.*)

THE MARQUESS OF LONDONDERRY: I admit that the noble Lord is quite justified in raising the point. It is quite true that by this Bill powers are given to the metropolitan boroughs which are not extended to boroughs under the Act of last year, but if the noble Lord did me the honour of listening to the speech I delivered the other day he will have recognised that I laid great importance on the fact that the metropolitan boroughs occupied a very important position. I dwelt at considerable length on their population and wealth, and I also dwelt on the fact that many local authorities of smaller dimensions in other parts of the country had powers which were not extended to the metropolitan boroughs. I consider that the least we can do for the metropolitan boroughs is to give them a voice in regard to a certain amount of the details of the management of the schools in their boroughs. If your Lordships will carry your minds back to the debates that took place in the House of Commons, you will remember that this was really the result of a compromise between the claims of the Borough Councils and the County Council. The County Council, of course, is absolutely free to decide what are to be the powers to be given to these managers. I must say I consider it very essential that boroughs which have been recognised to be of such importance should have this voice. It has been said that a great deal too much work has been added to the already great amount of work which the London County Council has to do. If that is the case, I think the provision in the Bill that the Borough Councils should, after consultation with the London County Council, make arrangements in this direction, will lighten the burden of the County Council. I maintain that we are only doing justice to the metropolitan boroughs in this matter. Much as I would desire to accept an Amendment from the noble Lord, who has the interests of London education so much at heart, I cannot accept the Amendment.

*LORD MONKSWELL said he was much obliged to the noble Marquess for the suggestion that he desired the work of the London County Council to be lightened, but he failed to see how it would be at all lightened by the passing of the clause in its present form. The clause provided that the boroughs should, after consultation with the local education authority, decide the composition of the managers. Therefore, if the County Council were to do their duty, they must have formed an opinion on this matter. Therefore the argument that their labour would be lightened fell to the ground.

EARL SPENCER regarded this as a matter too important to be dealt with as a matter of compromise. He was not affected by the argument that the metropolitan Borough Councils were important bodies, for he considered that this was a matter entirely for the responsibility of the educational authority, which ought to be supreme.

LORD TWEEDMOUTH said the speech of the noble Marquess; both that night and on the Second Reading, seemed to him to prove too much. His observations were directed not to supporting the provisions of the Bill as it now stood, but the provisions in the Bill as it w s introduced in the House of Commons. The clause originally read:—

> "The council of each metropolitan borough shall be the managers of all public elementary schools provided by the local education authority within their borough."

The noble Marquess frankly admitted the other night that that was his idea of what the Bill should be, and he understood that though the noble Marquess had given way to Parliamentary pressure he still thought it would have been better to have given the whole matter of education in each particular borough to the Borough Council. Holding that view the speech of the noble Marquess that night was perfectly justified, but as he had been driven from that position to take up the view that the proper education authority for London was the London County Council, he thought the noble Marquess should have the courage of his conviction and admit that the local educational authority should have the power of decision without any drawback. He pressed the Government to reconsider their decision. Perhaps the noble Duke would be able to say that some concession would be made in this direction.

THE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (The Duke of DEVONSHIRE): My Lords, the noble Earl opposite objects to this question being treated as one of compromise, and says it is too important to be considered on that basis, but the noble Earl cannot get away from the fact that it is a compromise arrived at in the other House of Parliament. The original provision of the Bill did give to the Borough Councils absolute powers of management over the elementary schools in their districts. Under the compromise which was come to in the other House it gave to the Borough Councils not the absolute power of management, but the power of determining, after consultation with the education authority, and subject to the sanction of the Board of Education, the number of the managers of each school, the manner in which the schools should be grouped, and it provided that they should also have the appointment of two-thirds of the managers. On the other hand, the education authority retains the power of deciding what powers and duties they intend to entrust to the managers thus appointed. If the London County Council intend to carry on the administration of education in London exactly on the lines which were described by the noble Lord the Chairman of the London School Board the other night, I should admit that any provision of this sort was unnecessary; but, as noble Lords opposite have pointed out, the labour which would be imposed on the County Council by adding to their work all that is now done by the London School Board would tax to too great an extent their powers and their abilities. We believe that the London County Council will be compelled to decentralise their administration much more than the London School Board has done, and we think it would be a very good thing that they should do so. If there is to be decentralisation, it is to the Borough Councils, to the minor municipal authorities of this great city, that we must look for assistance in the work of decentralisation, and if we expect to receive any assistance from them, surely it is not an unreasonable thing to suggest that they should have, not a controlling voice, because the ultimate decision will not rest with them, but that they should have at all events the power of making their suggestions in consultation with the education authority as to the organisation and local management of the schools. I believe that this is a duty which they will be competent and willing to undertake. I admit that I should have preferred the proposal that was originally in the Bill. I should have preferred to delegate specifically certain powers of management to these great bodies, but mainly I suppose, on educational grounds, that solution did not commend itself to the judgment of the other House, and this compromise has been accepted in its place. I must point out that any such alteration as has been suggested by noble Lords opposite would have a very serious effect upon the probable fate of this Bill. This compromise was only arrived at after long and protracted discussion in the other House. To send the Bill back with an Amendment, which would practically amount to striking the Borough Councils out of the administration of education in London altogether, would inevitably in the other House revive all those discussions which have hitherto taken place, and I think that it might—though I do not wish in any way to use the language of menace—have the effect of possibly endangering the final acceptance of the measure. That may be a course which does not hold out any terror to noble Lords opposite, but I think the great majority of Members on this side of the House will think twice before they assent to an Amendment which certainly would lead to a renewal of protracted discussion in the other House, and would be productive of the greatest inconvenience and danger.

LORD DAVEY objected to the clause on the ground of the divided responsibility which it created and which he believed would be fatal to good administration. They ought to throw the whole responsibility upon the body which had the administration of the schools. He was not at all impressed with the susceptibilities either of the County Council or the Borough Councils, and was indifferent to the question whether this was a compromise or not. He regarded the provisions of the Bill solely from the point of view of whether they would tend to the efficiency of London education, and he could not but think that to divide the responsibility between the Borough Councils and the local education authority in an important matter of this kind would not tend in that direction.

THE MARQUESS OF LONDONDERRY: The noble and learned Lord has overlooked the fact that this Bill leaves the County Council absolutely free to decide what powers should be given to the managers, and, therefore, to a certain extent the managers are controlled by the education authority. Also, I think the noble and learned Lord has not realised that the Bill provides that the Borough Councils shall act after consultation with the education authority, and that any arrangement made by them has to be approved by the Board of Education. This provision guards against Borough Councils acting in any way calculated to prejudice the educational policy of the local education authority. I believe that the fears that the County Council and the metropolitan Borough Councils may not work amicably together are vain. I am of opinion that the local bodies will do the utmost, with their local knowledge, to promote the cause of education. In the interests of the County Council itself it is desirable that the Council should consult with the local authorities.

*LORD REAY said it seemed to him to be an extraordinary position to allow the minor authority to decide after consulting the superior authority. It would be logical enough if the higher authority consulted the minor authority and then came to a decision.

Lord COLCHESTER held it to be desirable that those who were specially connected with a district should have a voice in its affairs. It was a great mistake to endeavour to treat London as one unit instead of as a collection of large boroughs which had very little in common. Obviously there could be little known by one district of the schools in another district, and he thought the same lack of knowledge would be found in their representatives on the County Council. He felt strongly the importance of giving those who were specially acquainted with a district a voice in its affairs.

On Question, whether the words proposed to be left out shall stand part of the clause,

Their Lordships divided :—Contents, 56 ; Not-Contents, 23.

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*The Lord BISHOP of ROCHESTER moved an Amendment substituting one-third for two-thirds as the proportion of the managers to be appointed by the Borough Council. He said it had been urged that it would be of great importance in the future to interest the local authorities in education, or, as it had been put even more effectively, to interest the people of London locally in their own schools. He felt the importance of that very much, but he could not but think that in this case, if the Borough Councils were allowed to appoint one-third of the managers, it would suffice to give them a very real interest in the schools. It was clear from the speech of the noble Duke at the Second Reading stage that the importance of the new managers would be greater than that of the old ; and he suspected that, if the existing managers were asked which course they preferred, they would prefer that the bulk of their body should be appointed by the central authority rather than by the local council. It was no use disguising the fact that the County Council and the Borough Councils did not always enter into the treatment of a subject with a predominant desire to find themselves at one. There was a tendency, at any rate, to antagonism, and it seemed then a serious risk to run with their eyes open, to allow the minor authority, on which, from the nature of the case, they were throwing a very large part of the educational responsibility, to be mainly constituted from a body which had some prepossession against the higher authority.

Amendment moved—

> "In page 1, line 16, to leave out the words 'two-thirds' and to insert the words 'one-third'; and in line 17, to leave out the words 'one-third' and to insert the words 'two-thirds.'"—(*The Lord Bishop of Rochester.*)

*Lord REAY, in supporting the Amendment, pointed out that the managers were not the agents of the metropolitan boroughs, but were appointed to carry out the educational policy of the County Council. The noble Duke the other night unfavourably contrasted the business methods of the School Board with those of a great railway company, but would any railway company ask another body to appoint a majority of its agents? By this clause, as it stood, they introduced an element of confusion into the administration and defeated their own object. How could they expect the County Council to devolve duties on bodies on which they would be represented by a minority? In these circumstances the delegation of powers to the managers would be restricted, and he doubted whether they would be allowed to have the power which they now possessed of appointing assistant teachers, and also of nominating the head teacher from three candidates selected by the School Board. Instead of having more devolution they would have less. In the borough of the Tower Hamlets, out of the 178 managers, fifty-two were resident elsewhere. Obviously the Borough Councils would endeavour, whether they found fit persons or not, to fill the bodies of managers by their own members and residents.

The Duke of DEVONSHIRE: Why?

Lord REAY said that if the appointment were left in the hands of the County Council better managers would be appointed. What was the position of the non-provided schools in this respect? In that case one manager would be appointed by the County Council and one by the metropolitan borough. Why was there an equality in the case of non-provided schools and a disproportion in the case of provided schools? He thought the noble Marquess would be well advised to reconsider this point.

The Marquess of LONDONDERRY: I am afraid I cannot accept the Amendment, which is part and parcel of that which has already been rejected, the object of which was to take away the powers from the metropolitan boroughs. Perhaps the noble Lord will allow me to remind him of what took place in the House of Commons on this question. Mr. Peel's Amendment, which was the origin of the present provision, fixed three-fourths to be appointed by the Borough Council, and one-fourth by the County Council. On the Report stage this was altered to two-thirds and one-third respectively, on the ground that it enabled the number of managers to be varied more conveniently. That was a compromise on this question between the London Members and the local education authority. The right rev. Prelate in his speech dwelt on the fact that the method of appointment of these managers would lend interest to local life in London. It was the knowledge possessed by these men of the local requirements that led us to entrust this power to them and insist on their having a majority. In the past the managers have done excellent work, and there is no reason to distrust them in the future; but if the managers who are appointed do not come up to expectation the local education authority will be able to refuse to give them any powers whatever. The local authority is entrusted with the power of seeing that the managers appointed are, so to speak, up to the mark. We have had experience of the fact that these bodies are co-operating together for the public good, and why it should be imagined that there will be any friction under this clause I cannot understand. The local education authority can supersede the managers should they desire to do anything injurious to the education of the district.

Lord DAVEY said that the objection to the proposal was that, while the County

Council was made responsible for the efficiency of the school, its powers were to be exercised by a body the majority of which was not appointed by itself. This was the most wonderful provision that he had ever seen in an Act of Parliament. The policy of the Council might be thwarted by the managers, but it would have no power to remove them. Suppose there was a difference of opinion between the County Council, which represented the whole of London, and the Council of the Borough in which the school was situated, as to the policy to be pursued with regard to that school. In that case who ought to govern? Everyone would say the body on whom the responsibility for the efficiency of the school rested. But what would happen? The County Council, which appointed only one-third, could remove only one-third; and the Borough Council, which appointed two-thirds, would have the sole power—and that to his mind was much more important than the actual appointment — of removing those two-thirds. Under this system the Borough Council might appoint managers, and instruct them in perfect good faith to carry out a policy which was not dictated by the local education authority, and that authority might find itself thwarted by the board of managers, through whom it had to act, and over the appointment of the majority of whom it had no control. Such a provision as that was calculated to lead to difficulties, and to place obstacles in the way of the policy of the local education authority being rigidly and properly carried out.

THE MARQUESS OF LONDONDERRY: I should like to point out to the noble and learned Lord that the managers will have no powers except such as the County Council choose to delegate to them, and those powers can be withdrawn whenever the local education authority think fit.

LORD DAVEY said that it was one thing to delegate powers and another to see them carried out.

LORD TWEEDMOUTH said that this provision could not be described as a compromise, because one of the parties most concerned—the County Council—had not been consulted. The position of the London County Council had always been perfectly clear. It had taken the view that it would prefer not to have these duties thrown upon it, and that it would be better that the education of the children of London should be placed in the hands of a body specially elected for that purpose. But if Parliament decided that the London County Council was to be the local education authority, then it claimed that it should be the real education authority, and that in its hands should be placed complete power to control and deal with this question. To pretend that this was a compromise was surely a misapplication of terms. This provision was not a compromise—it was a scrap thrown to satisfy those who had been desirous of putting the whole of the control of education into the hands of the Borough Councils. The noble Marquess had said that the managers appointed under the present system had done extremely well, and that he had complete confidence that they would give equal satisfaction and do equally good work in the future. But how were the present managers appointed? They were not appointed by subordinate authorities, but were directly appointed by the central education authority—the London School Board. The London School Board selected the managers and delegated to them such powers as it thought proper, and they were actually agents to carry out the work of the Board. The case under this clause was a totally different one. It might just as logically be suggested that the noble Marquess should allow the choice of the managers of some of his great collieries to be made by a rival colliery owner hard by. He did not think the noble Marquess would like to see the managers under him appointed by his rivals in his own line of business, and, after all, that was very much the position of the Borough Councils to the London County Council. The managers were, above all, the agents of the central education authority, and he held therefore that they should be appointed by that authority.

*LORD MONKSWELL said the noble Marquess had defended his proposal by saying that in the event of there being any difference of opinion between the London County Council and the minor authorities the former would have the power of asserting their authority only by refusing to give any powers whatever to the managers. The County

Council might be obliged to place itself in a position in which the whole of this educational scheme would be brought to a standstill.

*LORD REAY placed before the noble Marquess an analogous illustration in which the selection of assistant and head teachers would devolve, not upon the present School Board, but upon a body of managers not chosen or employed by the Board.

THE MARQUESS OF LONDONDERRY: The question of teachers is undoubtedly in the hands of the managers, controlled by the local authority. The question is, whether the local authorities can be trusted or not. I think that they can be trusted, and no discourtesy is intended to the County Council in not asking it to undertake this work.

LORD BURGHCLERE said they were told last year that the object of the Education Act was to co-ordinate and simplify authorities. He would like to ask how the extraordinary provisions which had been pointed out in this clause in any way co-ordinated or simplified the education authorities. It was pointed out in the discussion on the Act last year that the Government, in their ardour to co-ordinate authorities, had introduced into the Bill rather more authorities than there were under the then existing condition of things; but under this Bill they were going still further in the same direction, because they introduced the municipal boroughs. The minor local authorities were to possess a power over the County Council which was not conferred elsewhere by the original Act. Nothing could be more ridiculous than to allow the minor authorities to override the County Council.

THE LORD ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY said that he approached this question with an open mind. He understood Lord Tweedmouth to say that the County Council and the Borough Councils were in the position of hostile authorities. The noble Lord spoke of two rivals in industrial concerns.

LORD TWEEDMOUTH: I said nothing and meant nothing of the sort. I said that the Borough Councils in relation to the County Council were subsidiary authorities.

THE SECRETARY FOR SCOTLAND (Lord BALFOUR of BURLEIGH): The noble Lord used the expression "rivals in business."

THE LORD ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY said that he was in the recollection of the House. The noble Lord spoke of the heads of two rival industrial concerns, and asked whether one owner would like to have the management of his concern appointed by the head of another rival in business. If that was the view which was taken of the relation of the Borough Councils to the County Council, they were indeed touching on a larger question than was raised by the Amendment. He should like in the strongest terms to protest against the idea that the two authorities, which were appointed with a view to the fullest co-operation and friendly and harmonious working, should ever be held up as intended to oppose one another in this matter.

EARL CARRINGTON said there was no rivalry between the County Council and the Borough Councils in London. The question before the House was whether it was right to place these minor bodies in a majority against the County Council.

On Question, whether the words proposed to be left out shall stand part of the clause,

Their Lordships divided: Contents, 49; Not-Contents, 24.

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Manchester, D.

Marlborough, D.
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Bath, M.

Clarendon, E. (*L. Chamberlain.*)
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Doncaster, E. (*D. Buccleuch and Queensberry.*)

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Eldon, E.
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Vane, E. (*M. Londonderry.*)
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Ribblesdale, L. [*Teller.*]
Sandhurst, L.
Tweedmouth, L.
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Drafting Amendment agreed to.

*LORD REAY said that if the existing bodies of managers were to cease to exist on the appointed day, there would be an interim during which some confusion might arise. He therefore moved the insertion of words providing that the existing body of managers should be continued until the new bodies were appointed.

Amendment moved—

"In page 1, line 24, after the word 'provision,' to insert the words 'the existing bodies of managers shall be continued until the new bodies of managers are appointed.'"—(*Lord Reay.*)

THE MARQUESS OF LONDONDERRY: I think the noble Lord will admit that this is not an Amendment of very great importance. It was proposed in the other House by Mr. Lough, but was not pressed to a division, my colleague, Sir William Anson, expressing his unwillingness to insert a provision which might act as an inducement to the authorities not to put the Bill into operation at the earliest possible date. I can assure the noble Lord that the point will receive our attention.

Amendment, by leave of the House, withdrawn.

Clause 2, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 3.

THE MARQUESS OF LONDONDERRY: The object of the new clause which I have to move after Clause 2 is to make it clear that schools belonging to the London School Board outside London shall be treated as if they were in London. It is moved on behalf of one or two schools that otherwise would receive exceptional treatment. Sub-section 2 of the new clause deals with the case of a school situated partly in one Metropolitan Borough and partly in another.

Amendment moved—

"After Clause 2, to insert the following new clauses:—'(1.) As from the passing of this Act, any public elementary school provided by the London School Board before the passing of this Act, which is wholly or partly situated outside the county of London, shall, for the purposes of this Act, be treated as, and for the purposes of the principal Act be deemed to have been, wholly situated within the county of London and within the nearest metropolitan borough. (2.) Any public elementary school provided by the local education authority which is situated partly in one metropolitan borough and partly in another shall, for the purpose of this Act, be deemed to be situated in such one of those boroughs as the local education authority determine.'"—(*The Marquess of Londonderry.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

*LORD REAY said the Amendment standing in his name was accepted by the Government in the other House, but, on Report, was defeated on division. The

London Government Act, 1889, contained this section:—

> "The Local Government Board may, if they think fit, on the application of the London County Council and of the majority of the Borough Councils, make a Provisional Order for transferring to all the Borough Councils any power exercisable by the County Council or for transferring to the County Council any powers exercisable by the Borough Councils."

That was an extremely wide power of transfer, and when the Act of 1899 was passed no one, of course, contemplated that it would apply to education, as the Borough Councils then possessed no educational powers. Moreover, it was entirely unnecessary in this case, because the Act of 1902, in Section 20, gave the powers required. The clause as it stood brought in two Government Departments, for, of course, the Local Government Board would not allow powers with regard to education to be transferred without consulting the Board of Education. This procedure seemed to him unnecessary, and in the interests of the smooth working of the Bill he thought it would be well that the section of the London Government Act, 1899, in question should not apply to proceedings under this Bill.

Amendment moved—

> "To insert the following new clause:—'Subsection 3 of Section 5, of the London Government Act, 1899, shall not apply to proceedings under this Act.'"—(*Lord Reay.*)

THE MARQUESS OF LONDONDERRY: This clause was inserted in the House of Commons on the Motion of Mr. Lough, and accepted on behalf of the Government. On the Report stage a Motion was made to strike out the clause, and the matter was left to the House of Commons to vote exactly as they pleased, with the result that the clause was struck out by 214 votes to 120. When I tell your Lordships that these powers cannot be transferred unless the County Council applies, unless the majority of the Borough Councils are willing, unless the Local Government Board give their consent, and unless the transfer is approved by Parliament, it will at once be seen that the matter is sufficiently safeguarded. I do not think it would be fair at this late period of the session to send the clause back to the House of Commons for reconsideration.

Amendment, by leave of the House, withdrawn.

*LORD REAY did not think the noble Marquess could have any objection to the next Amendment. Under the Technical Instruction Act, which was repealed, the County Council had the power to provide, or assist in providing, scholarships, or pay, or assist in paying, the fees of students ordinarily resident in the district of the local authority in schools within or outside that district. Therefore they had the power to give scholarships at an elementary school. Under this Bill, however, the power of the County Council to give scholarships at elementary schools would no longer exist, and the result would be disastrous to those to whom it was very important that there should be afforded this first step in the ladder of advancement. Unless a provision of the nature contained in his Amendment were inserted in the Bill, the lack of it would make itself very seriously felt.

Amendment moved—

> "To insert as a new clause (B) 'The local education authority may aid the education of scholars in public elementary schools who are exempt from the legal obligation to attend school by scholarships, free education, grants of books, or otherwise.'"—(*Lord Reay.*)

THE MARQUESS OF LONDONDERRY: This Amendment has relation to a subject with which the Government will have to deal by a measure having application to the whole country. It is under the consideration of the Board of Education, and my colleague, Sir William Anson, has drafted a clause which provides that—

> "The local education authority shall be entitled to aid by scholarships the education of any scholar in a public elementary school who, being a scholar to whom instruction can legally be given in such a school, is exempt from the legal obligation to attend school."

I hope that next year a measure will be brought forward that will meet the views of the noble Lord, who, I hope, will not insist on his Amendment.

*LORD REAY said that as the reply gave him more than he asked for he would not press the Amendment.

Amendment, by leave of the House, withdrawn.

Clause 3 agreed to.

Clause 4

THE MARQUESS OF **LONDONDERRY** formally moved the following Amendment.

Amendment moved—

"In page 2, line 20, after the word 'shall' to insert the words 'except as expressly provided.'"—(*The Marquess of Londonderry.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Clause 4, as amended, agreed to.

Schedule 1.

*THE LORD **BISHOP** OF **HEREFORD** said the Amendment which he desired to move bore upon Section 17 of the governing Act, the first sub-section of which was to the effect that any Council having powers under the Act shall establish an Education Committee, or Education Committees, constituted in accordance with the scheme made by the Council, controlled by the Board of Education, provided, etc. He proposed to determine by statute the form of the Educational Committee of the London County Council, which would, of course, be subsidiary to and working under the Council. The members of the Committee were to consist first of all of one member from each electoral division for the County Council, to be elected at the same time as the members of the County Council, on the same franchise, and by the same process, but with the difference that women were to be eligible for election equally with men, and secondly, to consist of nineteen members appointed from their own body by the County Council, and ten members, men or women, experienced in education, to be appointed by the County Council. It would be seen that of such a Committee the County Council would appoint the majority and the rest would be directly elected. Upon a superficial view it might be thought that this was an attempt to bring back the School Board, but it simply went to the extent to bring into the administration of the County Council all the best elements of the School Board administration. There was no attempt in this Amendment to revive the School Board, but merely to retain the principle of direct election. There were, indeed, several obvious advantages in such a Committee if it were made a statute. In the first place, such a body—a very impartial, thoroughly representative and efficient type of body — would relieve the excessively overburdened County Council. It would take off the whole burden which was being put upon it by the Bill in this shape, and he did not think there was any Member of their Lordships' House who doubted that this large amount of administrative work would overburden the Council, and that in consequence they could hardly fail to be inefficient in one part of their work or another. Therefore it was for efficiency of education and the whole work of the County Council that he ventured to urge this Resolution on the House. Then, again, by the appointment of one member, one man or one woman from each electoral division, they had an opportunity of securing a person who was directly interested in the great and good work of the education of the children of this Metropolis, and they held on to the principle of direct popular representation. In his judgment one of the greatest defects in this legislation, in which they had been engaged for two years, was the tendency to depart from the principle of direct election by the people of the persons who had to do their work.

Then, again, this Amendment gave them the opportunity of enlisting capable women for the work, and putting them in their rightful position on the Council. In the Bill as it stood it was generally thought outside that one of its great defects was that it practically disfranchised women from being elected. Those women who had worked so devotedly on the School Board for London practically disappeared, and seeing that three-fourths of the teachers and pupil teachers in the schools were women, and at least one half of the pupils were girls, he contended that it would be reasonable, and would certainly tend to an efficiency of devotion to the work, if women were admitted to their proper place in the education of the country. Those were the main reasons on which he ventured to urge this Amendment for adoption by the House. He knew that some persons who have not had any experience in practical administration of that kind would say that it was hardly reasonable to elect popular representatives on the Committee of the Council, but no person of practical educational experience would venture to say that. He himself was working happily on two Education Committees at that moment under the Bill of last year, and the Archbishop of Canterbury had informed him that he was the only Bishop who was fortunate, or unfortunate, enough to be appointed on such Committees. He had worked on a Committee under the County Council which was just in the same position that this Committee would be, and he could assure their Lordships that the County Council almost invariably accepted the decision of that Committee, so that there would be nothing to deter the best persons from offering themselves as candidates. Again, in the City Committee in Hereford they had had some experience, and out of this experience he ventured to urge as advisable for the good work of the Metropolis, the establishment of an Education Committee under the London County Council such as he had sketched out. He had no doubt that it would work with far more efficiency and harmony than would any other kind of Committee which had been indicated, and he ventured to hope that it might commend itself even now to the noble Marquess in charge of the Bill.

Amendment moved—

"In page 3, after paragraph (3) to insert as a new paragraph the words: The provisions of Sub-section 1 of Section 17 of the principal Act shall not apply, and the Education Committee of the London County Council shall consist of—(1) One member from each electoral division for the County Council, to be elected at the same time as the members of the County Council, on the same franchise and by the same process, women to be eligible for election equally with men; (2) Nineteen members, appointed from their own body by the County Council; (3) Ten members, men or women experienced in education, appointed by the County Council. This Committee shall come into existence at the time of the next County Council election, the Act to be administered meanwhile by the present School Board together with the twenty-nine persons appointed by the County Council under (2) and (3) above, acting as the Education Committee of the County Council."—(*The Lord Bishop of Hereford.*)

EARL SPENCER said he rose at once to say two or three words on the proposal of the right rev. Prelate, because he had a great deal of sympathy with the proposition. He always felt in favour of what was called an *ad hoc* authority for dealing with this matter. He also felt very strongly in favour of electing women who had done such good work on the School Board. At the same time, he felt there was some difficulty in adopting in this Bill the proposition of the right rev. Prelate, which was to modify the School Board as a Committee. He had very great sympathy with the view of the right rev. Prelate, and if they were dealing with the thing *de novo* he thought there would be a great deal in what had been said. He was afraid that he had not quite gathered the argument made by the right rev. Prelate, that in his own experience in this matter the Committee of another body should be independently elected.

*THE LORD BISHOP OF HEREFORD: I said a minority of the whole Committee.

EARL SPENCER said he was not aware that in the country any such minority was now elected in that way. Those were the reasons why, although he very much regretted they could not adopt something of the sort, he doubted whether it could be brought conveniently into the present Bill. The form of the Bill did not seem quite in unison with the proposal of the right rev. Prelate, and much as he sympathised with the endeavour to get a new element into the matter, he felt there would be a very great difficulty to be encountered. Then he saw another difficulty, which was by no means clear. The members would be only elected to the Committee. That was an anomaly which he thought was a very serious one, and he ventured to hope that the right rev. Prelate would not press this alteration in the schedule to a division.

THE MARQUESS OF LONDONDERRY: I do not think after the remarks of the noble Lord that there is anything for me to say. He has recognised, as I do, that if this Amendment were to be accepted it would ignore virtually everything that has taken place in the House of Commons with regard to this Bill. Any question of a body elected *ad hoc* could not receive our sanction at the present time. I therefore really do not think the noble Lord will go to a division, and I also do not think he will think me discourteous in not answering at a greater length, which, however, I am perfectly willing to do if he so desires.

THE LORD BISHOP OF HEREFORD said he would not press the Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

THE LORD BISHOP OF HEREFORD said he ventured to think his next Amendment was not open to the objections to the previous one. It dealt with the subject of endowment. The endowment of schools in the London Bill was a new clause. It involved a departure from the parent Bill, and he was very glad to see it, because he recognised it as a great advance upon the Bill of last year. He would even go so far as to say that it was almost a confession that a mistake was made last year. In his own diocese the prevalent conviction was that a great mistake had been made; that they had wasted large sums of money which might, and he ventured to think would, have been used for helping forward the education of the children of the poor. To that extent they had been educationally impoverished by the action of that Bill. Turning to the London Bill he was glad to see that powers were taken to deal with endowments, although he was afraid that they were taken in a very half-hearted manner, so that the repentance did not appear to be either complete or effective As the clause in the schedule ran the Board of Education had to wait for direct application from the trustees of the endowment in one case, or from the local education authority in the other case. That being so, what was likely to happen? Where they had trustees who might be said to be public-spirited trustees or generously-minded towards the poor children, or who were really earnest in and devoted to the cause of education, they would undoubtedly make an application. Similarly with the local education authorities. If they were stirred up by a generosity which was not usually found in local authorities, then they would apply to the Board of Education. But supposing that neither of those applied to the Board then the trustees were left to use the endowments for the up keep of the school buildings and similar purposes. That would happen in many cases, and money would be used for purposes for which it was never intended; to that extent they would be impoverished and the money would be confiscated. The local authorities would have to ask themselves the question whether they should let the money go to the relief of the rates or apply it to the schools, and in many cases they would elect to put it to the relief of the rates. The facts would be that if they had a public-spirited and generously-minded body the money would be applied to its proper educational purpose, but if they had an inert and selfish body the trust would be abused and the money would be confiscated. On that ground he hoped that the noble Marquess would be willing to accept his Amendment, which was simply to make an educational use of this endowment. All that he asked was that it should be the duty of the Board of Education, with regard to all endowments which at the time of the passing of the Act were being used for education, in all such cases to make the scheme an educational scheme, and that the endowment should continue to be used for a genuine educational purpose, and due regard had to the educational needs of the children of the locality or district for which the benefits of the particular endowment were originally intended. He was sure that their Lordships were anxious to have everything reasonable done with a view to help on the education of the children.

Amendment moved—

"In page 3, line 22, to leave out from the word 'education' to the end of paragraph 4, and insert the words 'shall, by scheme or order, define the use to be made of any endowment to which this sub-section would have applied. Under any such scheme or order, the endowment shall be used for educational purposes, and due regard shall primarily be had to the educational interests of the children of the locality or district for which the benefits of the endowment were originally intended.'"—(*The Lord Bishop of Hereford.*)

THE LORD BISHOP OF LONDON said in many cases these endowments were left for the poor schools and were left for the fabric of the schools. No one in the world was more anxious than himself to see the children properly educated, or had more sympathy with the desire of the right rev. Prelate, but they had to be just before they were generous. In St. Paul's they had to consider the questions of keeping up the service and putting the choristers out in suitable positions in life, but the first and chief question was that of the fabric. The schools could not exist unless the fabric were kept up. As it was, all that was left in many cases for that purpose was the endowment trust, and now the right rev. Prelate proposed to take that away. Therefore, whilst he was in sympathy with the right rev. Prelate's motives he could not support the Amendment.

*THE LORD BISHOP OF HEREFORD wished to point out that where any endowment was left for the fabric it would of course be used for that purpose. His Amendment only applied to endowments which, at the time of the passing of the Act, were being used for elementary education.

THE LORD BISHOP OF LONDON said his point was that the first essential part of the school was the fabric of the school, without which they could not carry on the purposes of education. He must oppose what he understood to be the real meaning, intent and result of the Amendment.

LORD COLCHESTER said he expressed himself last year as being in sympathy with the object of the right rev. Prelate, but he saw one or two difficulties attending the Amendment. In the first place, when endowments were left for the poor they were not always left for the purposes of elementary education. It was quite possible that if this Amendment were to be passed it would only perpetuate an abuse which had grown up. Again, if any of these endowments were denominational it would be a very serious matter if the object which the denominational founder had in view were to be disregarded. Therefore, while he sympathised with the general principle of the Amendment, he could not vote for it.

LORD DAVEY said he also sympathised with the object of the right rev. Prelate who, he thought, did not quite grasp the effect of the clause in the schedule. The effect of Section 4 of the schedule was to except from this Act certain sections of the principal Act of 1902 and to enact instead with regard to all endowments that the Board of Education might make schemes with respect to those endowments. But those endowments were not endowments which as the right rev. Prelate seemed o suppose were devoted to purposes other than education, such as the repair of the fabric, ecclesiastical purposes generally, or anything of that kind. Section 4 of the schedule only applied to endowments which could be applied for the purposes of elementary schools including the maintenance of the school house. The Amendment of the right rev. Prelate also applied to those endowments of the character mentioned, and the effect of the Amendment was that, whereas under the schedule proposed it was necessary that the Board of Education should be put in motion either by the trustees of the charity or by the local education authority, the Amendment of the right rev. Prelate would make it obligatory on the Board of Education to define the use of the endowments which the scheme put in motion. He thought that was an improvement, and that the Board of Education would probably find this to be a freer Act than if it was necessary that they should be put in motion in the manner proposed in the schedule. But for practical purposes he confessed that as it applied only to the London County Council he did not think there would be any practical difference in the result, and he should certainly prefer that the Board of Education should be left free and without the necessity of their being put in motion in the manner proposed in the schedule. With regard to the latter part of the Amendment he thought it would be an improvement to insert it in the Bill, as it would define the purposes for which the scheme was to be made and he should consider it very doubtful whether it would not be *ultra vires* for the Board of Education to make a scheme for any other purpose than that referred to in the Amendment. He should therefore be disposed to support the Amendment, although he did not think that, when it was thoroughly threshed out, it would confer a great practical improvement on this Bill.

*THE LORD CHANCELLOR (The EARL of HALSBURY): I really do not know, after what my noble and learned friend has said, that it is very desirable to pursue the discussion of this Amendment. As I understand him, and I concur in his view, it will make no practical difference to this particular Bill. This matter has been settled in the House of Commons by an Amendment by the Government, which was accepted by Sir Michael Foster with great gratitude. I really think it would be undesirable to disturb that agreement. There is only one observation that I wish to make, and that is, that educational purposes must surely include the upkeep of the schools, and if diverted from that, the endowments would be diverted from educational purposes.

On Question, Amendment negatived.

THE MARQUESS OF LONDONDERRY: My Lords, the paragraph I am moving to insert was acquiesced in by the President of the Local Government Board on the request of Dr. Macnamara in the House of Commons. It is, with regard to the accounts being open to inspection by ratepayers, and we therefore came to the conclusion that if a Committee acts independently with regard to delegated powers their accounts shall not be open to inspection, but if it is approved by the County Council they shall be open. It is quite possible for a Committee to have matters to deal with of a confidential character. Questions of the character of the teachers, the division of grants, and similar matters, might arise, which it would be inadvisable to make public, unless the Committee were acting with the County Council. The Amendment is uncontroversial, and I therefore beg to move it.

Amendment moved—

"In page 4, line 3, after paragraph 6, to insert as a new paragraph the words, 'Where the London County Council delegate to their Education Committee any powers, and the acts and proceedings of the Committee as respects the exercise of those powers are not required to be submitted to the Council for their approval, Sub-section 1 of Section 233 of the Municipal Corporations Act, 1882 (which provides for the inspection and the taking of copies of Minutes) shall apply to the Minutes of the Committee relating to the exercise of those powers as it applies to the Minutes of the Council.'"—(*The Marquess of Londonderry.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

THE EARL BEAUCHAMP said he would have regard to the state of physical exhaustion of their Lordships by reason of the lengthened sitting, and would speak very briefly to the Amendment that appeared on the Paper in his name. With regard to the two words, "by agreement," he would like to say that it was only intended that this clause should take effect in the event of the foundation managers and the local authority coming to an agreement. There was to be no sort of compulsion. Then the words, "outside the ordinary hours of the school time-table," were inserted in order that schools might be left in the hands of the foundation managers, except for the purposes of secular teaching — that was to say, foundation managers to arrange their schools for Sunday schools, evening classes, or even to let the schools for entertainments. He was bound to say that since the Board of Education issued the new by-law he was not sure what hours the school time-table would set forth. That, however, was a matter which could easily be made clear. So far as religious education went he might say that a system such as this had been in vogue in Birmingham for some years in the Board schools, and had given every satisfaction. The Church of England had taken advantage of it, and the Church people there had professed themselves to be entirely satisfied with the character of the religious education that had been given, and with the general results. He ventured to think this was a solution of the difficulty with regard to religious education that the Lord Bishops professed to be anxious to get rid of. There is an easier way open, by giving up the attempt to control secular education in the schools throughout the country, but if they did not see their way to do that, he hoped they would support this new clause. It ran on the lines of the compromise proposed for Wales, and would place the voluntary schools on the same basis as the Board schools were placed under the Act of 1870. Therefore it would, he hoped, foreshadow some agreement on the part of all these bodies in the State with regard to education.

Amendment moved—

"In Page 4, after paragraph 7, to insert as a new paragraph the words 'All public elementary voluntary schools within the area shall be maintained by the local education authority as if they were provided schools, provided that the local education authority shall, by agreement, rent the school premises from the trustees, free use of the premises being granted to the denominations under whose auspices the schools have hitherto been conducted for purposes of denominational religious teaching outside the ordinary hours of the school time-table, to the children of such parents as make written application for the same. If any question arises under this section between the local education authority and the managers of a school not provided by the authority in respect to the use and rental of the premises, the matter shall be determined by the Board of Education.' "—(*Earl Beauchamp.*)

THE MARQUESS OF LONDONDERRY: I do not think the noble Earl for a moment imagines I can accept his Amendment. It seeks to reverse the whole scheme in last year's Bill with regard to voluntary schools. The whole scheme was discussed last year and was rejected. A similar Amendment to this was ruled out on the Report stage in the House of Commons on the ground that it was a charge on the rates. That having been ruled out, I do not know how your Lordships are to deal with this question, but I can only say that it must be taken as a cardinal principle of the Bill that the position of the voluntary schools, as settled last year, is not to be altered, and no difference can be made between the voluntary schools in London and those in the country. I can hold out no hope of the Amendment being accepted.

LORD DAVEY said he could not be surprised at the view expressed by the noble Marquess with regard to this Amendment, which was of a character that might have been more fitly adopted in the Act of last year, if it was intended to apply—and there was no reason why it should not—to the whole of the country. He felt indebted to the noble Earl for having suggested this question, because in his opinion it was an extremely important one, and he had always looked to a solution of this kind as a real solution which might meet the just desires and wishes of the supporters of denominational education as well as those who preferred the system of Board schools. He ought to observe that the scheme which was suggested in the Amendment of the noble Earl was really that of the powers already existing under Section 26 of the Act of 1870, and when he heard the most reverend Primate say that no scheme or plan had been suggested by any Party on that side of the House for a solution of the difficulty, he felt some surprise. The solution to be found in Section 26 of the Act of 1870 had been put forward in the Press, by speeches both in the House of Commons and in that House, and in the literature that had been issued on the subject. He believed it was on the basis of the compromise proposed by his right reverend friend the Lord Bishop of Hereford. He (Lord Davey) had some right to speak on this subject, because he had for the last twelve years been a member and the chairman of a School Board in his own parish, in which they had carried out exactly this system. There they had a school which belonged to a charity. The School Board rented the school at a nominal rent under the powers of the Act of 1870. The trustees of the charity reserved to themselves the use of the school out of school hours, and they gave religious instruction in that reserved time. What happened? The school bell rang three-quarters of an hour before the school began, and religious education was given at the beginning of the school time. Then at a quarter to ten the bell rang again and the School Board work began. They found that system worked admirably and gave satisfaction to everybody. He had never heard a single complaint about it, either from the Church people, or from any member of the School Board, or from the Nonconformists themselves, and he had always thought that it afforded material for the solution of the question. He had always been of the opinion that if the clergy had embraced that solution it would have been of great advantage to them. There would have been no Kenyon-Slaney Clause or introduction of foreign managers into the control of religious education, but it would have been entirely in the hands of those to whom the school house belonged, and they would have been free from many of those restrictions which the clergy found to be rather irksome upon them. It was a subject upon which he felt a great interest. He regarded it as a real basis for the solution of the conflicting views of both parties. It was one to be welcomed by the Nonconformists, because it would not involve any payment of rates for the religious education that might be given by the trustees, and it was one which the supporters of undenominational education ought to—and he believed would—welcome, because it would relieve them of the cost of the maintenence of the building, and of very many restrictions under which they now suffered.

*THE LORD BISHOP OF ROCHESTER said that although anyone at this late hour spoke as with a halter round his neck, he thought it would not be respectful if no one sitting on those Benches expressed their views with regard to the Amendment. His objection would, of course, rest on the words "outside the ordinary hours of the school time-table." He could well imagine that the arrangement might work admirably in some cases, but they had to think not of instances but of the general rule, and in their view it would neither be respectful to the subject of religion nor practicable to make an arrangement by which that great subject should be taught outside the school hours and thereby give a kind of advertisement to the children concerned that they need not attend. It was important to the interests of peace in the future, and of a future settlement that they should recognise that any such arrangements must come within the school time-table. He had in his hand a paper by a Nonconformist, reproaching the Church for not coming to an arrangement based on facilities within the school time-table, but such an arrangement had never yet been responsibly suggested, and he was quite convinced that no arrangement would ever commend itself to the consciences of those denominationalists who require denominational teaching, so long as proposals were made that religious education should be given outside the school time-table. When the noble Lord said he thought a compromise had been proposed on that basis, he (the Lord Bishop of Rochester) was not sure what compromise was alluded to, but he thought perhaps it was that suggested by Dr. Macnamara. He felt, and Dr. Macnamara knew at the time, that that was a point which from their point of view put his proposals out of Court.

*THE LORD BISHOP OF HEREFORD said as he had been referred to in connection with the compromise he should like to say by way of explanation that the noble and learned Lord opposite had not received quite the right impression of the compromise which he had more than once proposed in regard to the voluntary schools. It was, he understood, voluntary schools with which this Amendment would deal. He had always contended, in a compromise of the kind, that denominational instruction should be limited to a specified time—but to a specified time within the ordinary hours of the school curriculum. There lay all the difference. Whilst sympathising with the general view of the noble Earl he could not support the Amendment as it stood. He had another practical objection in his mind. From his experience in a country diocese he felt they had to consider both sides, and in many parishes there was no sufficient reason for so drastic a remedy. The Lord Bishop of Rochester had suggested that he should figure a little more in the shape of a mediator. He could only say that he had been mediating for seven years, and he was afraid that with regard to some points the time for mediation was now over. But with regard to the Amendment he felt that in the country this is not the best mode of solving the difficulty.

On Question, Amendment negatived.

LORD BURGHCLERE said he had reason to believe that the Amendment he had to submit had never been brought forward in the House of Commons. It appealed to a large class of people and spoke for itself. It was a supplementary Amendment to one that was to be moved later, and it dealt with religious tests as applied to those who wished to become teachers and were about to go into training colleges. The object of the Amendment was to enjoin upon the London County Council, who would be the particular educational authority under the Act to make adequate provision for those who wished to have undenominational colleges. The noble Marquess would observe that under the Bill the London County Council were only obliged to provide additional colleges if they considered the existing arrangements insufficient, and if they thought on the other hand that there were at the present moment sufficient opportunities for those who wished to have undenominational training, they would not be obliged to alter the present conditions. He would venture to point out that there could be no reproach cast upon those who asked for these undenominational colleges. They were in no sense irreligious persons, but they preferred to get the tenets of their faith from spiritual guides rather than to look upon them as tickets of entrance to a particular college. What was the provision existing at the present moment in this country for denominational and undenominational colleges? In England and Wales there were 45 residential training colleges, of which 38 were denominational. Of these 14 were for men and 24 for women. Therefore there were only seven undenominational colleges in the whole of England and Wales, two being for men and five for women. Then, what was much more germane to the Bill and to his Amendment, he asked their Lordships to consider how many of these training colleges there were in London, to which place the Bill applied. In London there were 12 residential colleges, of which 10 were denominational and only 2 in the whole of this great Metropolis were undenominational, one being for men and the other for women. But he was bound to admit that, as he understood it, there were day training colleges for teachers to which he had not alluded. In one sense, at any rate, they fulfilled the object which his Amendment had at heart, because those who wished to be teachers attended day training colleges and would not live in denominational hostels. These day training colleges were practically undenominational as regarded particular students. He welcomed some regulations that the Board of Education had lately brought forward for the purpose of encouraging day training rather than residential colleges for teachers. They were prepared to encourage hostels by grants, where those pupils who wished eventually to become teachers resided, and who attended day training colleges in the daytime. The Board of Education had promised grants to denominational hostels, and it was quite obvious that if a teacher had to live in a denominational hostel, there was a test on that student even if he attended a day training college which was undenominational. His Amendment would enable the London County Council, as the principal education authority, to encourage undenominational hostels, of which he was told there were very few at the present moment, and also to encourage the establishment of day training colleges for undenominational teachers. The present system imposed upon those who wished to become teachers in public schools a sort of religious test. The hostels, which were mainly of a denominational character, also imposed a religious test, and his Amendment empowered and enjoined, but did not impose upon the London County Council, if they thought the present provision for undenominational colleges inadequate, to provide them for those who were to become teachers, and who wished for such educational provision. He did not think his Amendment was in any way one that could not be accepted. It was desired by many people in this country, and he hoped, having regard to the inadequate provision for undenominational training at the present moment that it would be taken into favourable consideration.

Amendment moved—

"In Page 4, after paragraph 7, to insert as a new paragraph the words, 'It shall be the duty of the education authority to make adequate provision of training colleges or of day training colleges, to which all qualified pupils shall be admitted without inquiry into their religious beliefs, and in which no religious catechism or formulary which is distinctive of any particular denomination shall be used.'"—(*Lord Burghclere.*)

THE MARQUESS OF LONDONDERRY: I am afraid that it is impossible to accept the Amendment of the noble Lord, for the simple reason that it would make the provision of training colleges by the local authority compulsory. As this is a very important and serious matter, I have been careful to supply myself with the reply which should be given to the noble Lord on this point. The answer I have framed is as follows: This Amendment cannot be accepted. It would make the provision of training colleges by the local education authority compulsory. The local education authority, under their secondary education powers, have power to provide such training colleges. The question whether the provision of secondary education in any form at all was to be made compulsory was fully debated last year; and Section 2 of last year's Act represents the farthest extent to which the House of Commons would go in that direction. Under that section the local education authority are to "consider the educational needs of their area, and take such steps as seem to them desirable, after consultation with the Board of Education, to supply or aid the supply of education other than elementary." It is made quite clear by Section 22 (3) that the power to supply education other than elementary includes the power to train teachers. The actual compulsory supply of education corresponds, and should correspnod, with the extent to which education is compulsory. A parent is obliged to give his child elementary education; and the duty of the State is to make sure that there are elementary schools to which a parent can send his child for the purpose. No duty is imposed on the parent to see that his child receives anything beyond elementary education, and therefore no duty is imposed on the State to provide such education. The part of the Amendment which provides that the training colleges provided by the local education authority should be undenominational is already provided for in last year's Act (see Section 4), under which any training colleges provided by the local education authority must be undenominational. The noble Lord asked with regard to grants given to hostels. They are given to hostels whether they are denominational or undenominational.

EARL SPENCER said he was not surprised at the answer given by the noble Marquess to his noble friend. Everything for which the Opposition asked, no matter how sound the arguments by which the request was supported, was refused by the Government, and, of course, against their majority it was impossible to prevail. His noble friend had not been answered in the least degree. The noble Marquess had quoted a memorandum on the subject, and said he relied on the provisions of the Act of last year. The House were repeatedly being told that everything in the Act of last year was sacred, and that the limits there laid down must not be overstepped. He, however, could not accept that proposition. There was nothing more needed in the country than increased facilities for the training of teachers, particularly for those who did not belong to the Church of England. More undenominational training was required. He was quite aware of the difficulties in the way, and possibly he felt them more, having had considerable experience of training institutions in Ireland, where the attempt to establish hostels for the different denominations had practically broken down. The real remedy was to establish day training colleges. According to the noble Marquess, there were ample powers in that direction under the head of secondary education. But those powers were optional, and his noble friend desired that the local authority should be obliged to deal with the matter. There were many districts in the country without sufficient training college accommodation for teachers, and the object of this clause was to lay it down as the imperative duty of the local authority to provide that which was so much needed, and without which all their Lordships would doubtless agree good education was impossible.

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE: I do not think my noble friend or anyone else has claimed a specially sacred character for the legislation of last year; and we are perfectly aware, as I said the other day, that as soon as they had the opportunity noble Lords opposite are pledged to alter—in fact, practically to repeal—it. But I venture to point out to the House again that the work we are now engaged in is not in the Amendment of the Act of last year, but the application of that Act to London, and I do think it would be very inconvenient and undesirable that we should now introduce a provision as regards London, which was deliberately rejected by the other House of Parliament last year in regard to the rest of the country. What reason has the noble Lord to suppose that the London County Council will not do all that is necessary in the way of providing the training college accommodation which may be necessary? I was under the impression, until a short time ago, that the London County Council was a body in which noble Lords opposite reposed very considerable confidence. It is now proposed to make compulsory upon the London County Council the exercise of a duty which it has not been thought necessary to make compulsory upon the rest of the educational authorities in the country. That is an extremely curious way of showing the confidence which noble Lords opposite entertain in the London County Council, and I must altogether object to inserting this entirely novel provision in the Bill.

On Question, Amendment negatived.

THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH said he entirely agreed with the most rev. Prelate that the opposition to the Act of last year was not based on educational grounds so much as on grounds outside and beyond educational considerations, and he had reason to believe that that was the view of a great many people throughout the country. He did not say it as a matter for congratulation, but he believed that while the people of the country cared very little for education, they were greatly concerned with regard to the principles of injustice which, in their opinion, underlay the Act of last year and the Bill now before the House. The new paragraph which he proposed to insert would have the effect of removing a very real and substantial grievance which was felt most keenly by Nonconformists throughout the country. If these tests were to be established and maintained, he personally had no objection, because, detesting the Act as he did, he believed that no scheme could be devised by which the dislike of the Act would better be kept fresh and keen in the minds of the people than it would be by these tests. What was the position as regarded London? In London there were approximately 1,000 head teacherships and 5,000 assistant teacherships in voluntary schools. The best posts in all those voluntary schools could never be held by Nonconformists, and the assistant teacherships might, but probably would not, be so held. His noble friend Lord Burghclere had called attention to the necessity for undenominational training colleges, and that view he entirely endorsed. Under the present state of affairs Nonconformists were trained and examined, knowing all the while that however excellent might be their work in the examination they would be debarred, by a test of the kind against which his Amendment was directed, from the best positions in their profession. Such a position was perfectly indefensible and it was made the more indefensible by a by-law recently issued by the Government. By that by-law the time during which a child was required to attend school was to be held to be the time during which the school was open for secular instruction only. The result would be that in a great number of schools, both Board and voluntary, the children of the poor in London would never hear the Bible read, or receive any religious instruction whatever. That was what had happened from the endeavour to press denominational education too far. This was not imaginary, but a real case in London, because the very poor would naturally and almost inevitably employ their children in the selling of newspapers or in adding to the income of the home by some other means, with the result that they would not receive religious education of any sort or kind. He objected most strongly to that by-law, and it affected the question under discussion in that if children were allowed to be kept away from the school so that they received no religious instruction at all, there was no reason whatever why these tests should be imposed upon Nonconformists. If the time during which children were required to attend school was to be limited to the time during which the school was open for secular instruction, why could not the clergyman or minister of any particular denomination give religious instruction before the school opened?

THE MARQUESS OF LONDONDERRY pointed out that the noble Lord the Chairman of the London School Board had a Question down for to-morrow, and intended then to discuss this subject at considerable length. He hoped, therefore, the noble Earl would forgive him if, instead of replying on this point now, he reserved his remarks till to-morrow.

THE EARL OF PORTSMOUTH said he was simply stating these facts because they bore most pertinently on the question of tests. His contention was that if it was not necessary for the children to receive any religious instruction at all, and that if the time during which they had to attend school was limited to the time during which the school was open for secular instruction, the argument as to the importance of the denominational views of teachers in voluntary schools was very much weakened. Judged, therefore, by the action of the Government themselves in issuing this by-law, altogether apart from the hardship of reimposing these religious tests, he was unable to appreciate the importance of the teachers belonging to a particular religious denomination. He therefore moved the Amendment standing in his name, regretting that, in view of the strong feeling excited in the country on the principle involved, he would feel bound to insist on taking a division.

Amendment proposed—

> "In page 4, after paragraph 7, to insert the words, 'No teacher shall be required, as a condition of being appointed or continuing a teacher in any school or college aided or maintained by the local education authority, to belong to any particular religious denomination, or to attend or abstain from attending any place of religious worship, or religious observance, or Sunday School.' "—(*The Earl of Portsmouth.*)

*THE LORD ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY thought, with all respect to the noble Earl, that he was hardly conversant with all the facts in this particular matter. The Amendment divided itself into two parts, the object of the first part being to prohibit the imposition of the condition that a teacher should belong to a particular denomination, and that of the second to prevent a teacher being obliged to attend or to abstain from attending any place of religious worship, and so forth. The second part was already practically the law, as the Code laid it down that such a condition should not be imposed. The words of the Code were—

> "A teacher shall not be required to perform or to abstain from performing any duty outside ordinary school hours or unconnected with the ordinary work of the school."

That was a most wholesome, right, and legitimate provision of the Code, and it really disposed of the second part of the noble Earl's Amendment. He altogether disapproved of its being made a condition of a teacher's appointment that he should as a matter of absolute obligation undertake certain duties unconnected with the school and its work. He was quite aware that such a condition had not been unknown in the past, and it was possible that as a matter of private and terminable agreement, it was not unknown in the present, but if it should be made a matter of legal obligation, it was, in his opinion, indefensible in theory and practically inoperative in practice. When, however, he came to the further suggestion of the noble Earl, that it should be rendered impossible to require or to arrange that the teacher appointed to the head teachership in a particular school should belong to the denomination by the members of which the school was built and had been maintained, he was compelled to part company with the noble Earl. The issue there raised was a very wide and large one, involving the whole policy of the present Bill and of the Act of last year. It raised the question of the maintenance in any form whatever of schools in which denominational teaching was given. The noble Earl was perfectly consistent in objecting to this provision as part of the much larger provision that denominational schools as such should continue to be carried on. But if they were to be carried on, he fell back once more on the remark of Mr. Asquith that if denominational schools were to go on it was reasonable that the teachers should belong to the denomination which built the school. He did not wish to labour the point; it seemed hardly to require argument when fairly faced. He would instance the case of a school on the building of which £15,000 or £16,000 had been spent by members of a particular denomination, who were at the same time rated for undenominational schools, and were maintaining by annual subscriptions, amounting to £1,000 a year, the character of the teaching in the schools. That it should be said that, as a condition of receiving any help whatever, that school must be liable to have appointed to it as head teacher a Roman Catholic or Unitarian, did not appear to him to be at all fair.

A little while ago, when speaking to a friend who agreed with the noble Earl in opposing this Bill, he asked whether, if he were chairman of a small rural School Board, he would think it legitimate in appointing an infant mistress to ascertain whether or not the candidate was a Roman Catholic, and his friend said, "Certainly not. To ask such a question would be entirely and absolutely wrong." That was surely the *reductio ad absurdum* of the theory which had been laid down. To assert that in a school which had been built and maintained by the members of a particular section of the Christian community, and which as regarded the fabric, was still to be maintained by them, the head teacher who was to give the instruction might be one who definitely opposed the tenets of the denomination who had built and maintained the school, was to put forward one of the most illiberal, unfair and arbitrary contentions that could possibly be made That was his view as to the denominational test, as it was called. On the previous occasion when he spoke he did not refer to the denominational test as such, but to the question of whether or not the teacher, in order to be considered qualified to give religious instruction, should have been trained at a training college or elsewhere, and be able, as proved by examination and inquiry, to give the religious instruction in a proper manner. He was, however, quite ready to go further, and to say that in those schools which were still to have a denominational character, subject to all the safeguards imposed by recent legislation, which introduced for the first time a popular element on the governing body which was not only to help in appointing the teachers, but actually to control the religious teaching given, and subject also to the still prevailing conscience clause, it seemed to him to be almost a self-evident proposition that the teacher should belong to the denomination to which the school was attached. He would not follow the noble Earl into the question of the by-law which was to be discussed to-morrow. He would simply say that the noble Earl had not quite fairly represented the matter, as the adoption of the by-law by the local authority was entirely optional, and the relaxation was to be given only when a parent asked for it in writing. He merely mentioned that lest it should be supposed that he and others accepted the interpretation of the by-law which had been put forward. As to the proposal that denominational schools should in future be presided over by teachers who might be opponents of the Christian faith—or, indeed, of any form of faith whatever—he hoped it would not commend itself to their Lordships' House.

*THE LORD BISHOP OF HEREFORD, as he understood the noble Earl intended to divide the House on this question, desired to explain why he would be unable to support him. He strongly held the view that a wise and right policy was that the office of head teacher as well as that of assistant teacher in all publicly maintained schools should be open in this sense—that candidates for the office of head teachers should be eligible for appointment in voluntary schools, even though they did not profess to belong to the particular denomination to which the particular school was attached. It had to be borne in mind that in connection with all voluntary schools the foundation managers were in a majority, and the only effect of the Act of last year was to tie the hands of the Church majority, so that however much they desired to appoint the candidate whom they considered to be the most eligible, they were unable to do so unless he happened to be of the right denomination. That was his objection as an educationalist to the Act of last year. He knew of one case in which the managers, one of whom was a distinguished High Church leader, preferred to appoint as the head of a department a Wesleyan teacher rather than an inferior Church teacher. He was certain that many clergy and other managers of his diocese under similar circumstances would do the same, and it was for the benefit of both religion and education that they should do so. Moreover such an arrangement would remove a substantial grievance at present felt by Nonconformists. But further than saying that all candidates should be eligible he did not think they ought to go. It was not reasonable that in a Church school the managers should be bound down by such a clause as that now proposed.

Lord KINNAIRD thought the right rev. Prelate hardly realised that after the passing of this Bill the denominational schools would no longer be voluntary, but would be supported by the rates. There was a difference between a grant in aid for secular education, coming from the Consolidated Fund, and assistance from the rates to schools which had hitherto been called "voluntary." The by-law to which reference had been made showed the drift of events. It seemed as though that which many of them feared would be the result of this legislation was being gradually brought about, and that eventually the teaching of the Bible, according to the compromise of 1870, would be withdrawn from the children of the land, As to the re-imposition of tests on teachers. he agreed with the Bishop of Hereford in the belief that in many cases the common sense of the people of the country would ensure the appointment of the best teachers, but as long as the tests remained they would prevent much of the harmony which was so important in the question of the teaching of the children.

Earl SPENCER said the most rev. Primate had referred, in the course of the debate, and also on a previous occasion, to the opinion of Mr. Asquith that religious teaching would and must continue to be taught in the schools. That statement was made some years ago. His right hon. friend would never have made it with regard to this Bill under which the maintenance of the schools would fall chiefly on the rates. It was hardly fair, therefore, to quote the statement on the present occasion. As to the question under discussion, the whole thing turned on the fact that these schools were now to be maintained chiefly by public rates, and if these teachers were to be thus supported they, as public servants of the State, ought not to be subjected to tests.

On Question, their Lordships divided: Contents, 15; Non-Contents, 33.

CONTENTS.

Beauchamp, E.
Carrington, E.
Chesterfield, E. [*Teller.*]
Crewe, E.
Portsmouth, E.
Spencer, E.

Gordon, V. (*E. Aberdeen*).

Boyle, L. (*E. Cork and Orrery.*)
Burghclere, L.
Davey, L.
Kinnaird, L.

Monkswell, L.
Reay, L.
Ribblesdale, L. [*Teller.*]
Sandhurst, L.

NOT-CONTENTS.

Canterbury, L. Abp.
Devonshire, D. (*L. President.*)

Argyll, D.
Marlborough, D.
Portland, D.
Wellington, D.

Bath, M.

Clarendon, E. (*L. Chamberlain.*)
Abingdon, E.
Denbigh, E.

Doncaster, E. (*D. Buccleuch and Queensberry.*)
Hardwicke, E.
Howe, E.
Morley, E.
Onslow, E.
Stanhope, E.
Vane, E. (*M. Londonderry.*)
Waldegrave, E. [*Teller.*]

London, L. Bp.

Balfour, L.

Belper, L.
Cheylesmore, L.
Colchester, L.
Congleton, L.
Ellenborough, L.
Kenyon, L.
Kintore, L. (*E. Kintore.*)
Lawrence, L. [*Teller.*]
Robertson, L.
Suffield, L.
Ventry, L.
Windsor, L.
Wolverton, L.

Schedule 1 as amended agreed to.

Schedule 2 and title agreed to.

Standing Committee negatived. The Report of Amendments to be received on Tuesday next; and Bill to be printed as amended. (No. 182.)

METROPOLITAN STREETS BILL.

Read 3ª (according to order), and passed.

House adjourned at a quarter past Nine o'clock, till To-morrow, a quarter past Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Thursday, 30th July, 1903.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Great Western Railway Bill; Lancashire and Yorkshire and London and North Western Railways (Steam Vessels) Bill; Neath, Pontardawe, and Brynaman Railway Bill. Lords' Amendments considered, and agreed to.

Chard Corporation Gas and Electricity Bill [Lords]; Gosport and Fareham Tramways Bill [Lords]. Read the third time, and passed, with Amendments.

Gas and Water Orders Confirmation Bill [Lords]. Reported, with Amendments [Provisional Orders confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill, as amended, to be considered to-morrow.

Education Board Provisional Order Confirmation (London) Bill [Lords]. Reported, with Amendments [Provisional Order confirmed]; Report to lie upon the Table.

Bill, as amended, to be considered to-morrow.

Bury and District Joint Water Board Bill [Lords]. Reported, with Amendments; Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed.

Rochester Corporation Tramways and Improvements Bill [Lords]. Read the third time, and passed, with Amendments.

South Eastern and London, Chatham, and Dover Railways Bill [Lords]. To be read the third time to-morrow.

Manchester Corporation Bill [Lords]; Somerset and District Electric Power Bill [Lords]. As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

Wood Green Urban District Council Bill (by Order). Consideration of Lords' Amendments deferred till Monday next.

Birmingham District Tramways Bill [Lords] (by Order). Read the third time, and passed, with Amendments.

Tramways Orders Confirmation (No. 1) Bill [Lords]; Tramways Orders Confirmation (No. 2) Bill [Lords]. Read the third time, and passed, with Amendments.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have agreed to—Alexandra Park and Palace Bill, without Amendment.

Baker Street and Waterloo Railway (Extension of Time) Bill, with Amendments.

Amendments to—Gas Orders Confirmation (No. 2) Bill [Lords]; Bournemouth Corporation Tramways Bill [Lords]; Chatham and District Light Railways Bill [Lords]; Willesden Urban District Council Bill [Lords], without Amendment.

Lanarkshire Tramways Order Confirmation Bill [Lords] (by Order), considered.

And it being a quarter past Two of the Clock, further consideration was postponed under Standing Order No. 8 until Tuesday next, at the Evening Sitting.

PETITION.

DETENTION OF POOR PERSONS (SCOTLAND) BILL.

Petition from Lesmahagow, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

COTTON FACTORIES.

Return presented, relative thereto [Address 7th April—*Sir William Holland*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No 289.]

MERCHANT SHIPPING, 1902.

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 27th July—*Mr Gerald Balfour*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 290.]

COMPANIES (WINDING UP).

Copy presented, of Twelfth General Annual Report by the Board of Trade [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 291.]

BANKRUPTCY.

Copy presented, of Twentieth General Annual Report by the Board of Trade under The Bankruptcy Act, 1883 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 292.]

TRANSVAAL (BRITISH INDIANS).

Copy presented, of Despatch from the Governor of the Transvaal respecting the position of British Indians in that colony [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

POST OFFICE.

Copy presented, of Forty-ninth Report of the Postmaster-General [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

LOCAL TAXATION LICENCES, 1902–3.

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 23rd July—*Mr. Grant Lawson*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 293.]

POOR RELIEF (ENGLAND AND WALES).

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 27th July—*Mr. Grant Lawson*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 294.]

Papers laid upon the Table by the Clerk of the House.

INQUIRY INTO CHARITIES (ADMINISTRATIVE COUNTY OF DURHAM).

Further Return relative thereto [ordered 14th February, 1900; *Mr. Grant Lawson*]; to be printed. [No. 295.]

INQUIRY INTO CHARITIES (COUNTY OF LANCASTER).

Further Return relative thereto [ordered 8th August, 1898; *Mr. Grant Lawson*]; to be printed. [No. 296.]

SUGAR.

Return ordered, "of the price of Sugar in the markets of Calcutta, Bombay, Madras, Kurrachee, and Rangoon on the 30th day of June 1899, 1900, 1901, 1902, and 1903, with the duties chargeable on each of these dates."—(*Colonel Denny.*)

IMPERIAL DEFENCE AND CONSULAR SERVICE.

Return ordered, "of the total Cost of Imperial Defence, including India and the Crown Colonies, and of the total Cost of the Diplomatic and Consular Service to Great Britain and Ireland."—(*Mr. Cathcart Wason.*)

SUGAR CONVENTION (EXPENSES AND DUTIES.)

Committee to consider of authorising the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of certain expenses of the Permanent Commission in pursuance of any Act of the present session to make provision for giving effect to a Convention signed the 5th day of March, 1902, in relation to sugar, and of imposing certain duties in pursuance of such Act (King's Recommendation signified), To-morrow. —(*Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*)

COAL TABLES, 1902.

Copy ordered, "of Statistical Tables relating to the production, consumption, and imports and exports of coal in the British Empire and the principal foreign countries in each year from 1883 to 1902, as far as the particulars can be stated; together with statements showing the production of lignite and petroleum in the principal producing countries for a series of years (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 328, of Session 1902)."–-(*Mr. Gerald Balfour.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

International Currency.

MR. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): To ask the First Lord of the Treasury, whether he is aware that an American Commission on International Exchange is visiting the different Governments of Europe with the view of discussing monetary matters and the means of establishing stable ratio between gold and silver; and whether an opportunity will be given to the House to discuss the question of international currency upon a sound basis acceptable to gold and silver using countries.

(*Answered by Mr. A. J. Balfour.*) The hon. Member will see that in the present state of public business and at this period of the session it is not possible to find time for the discussion of currency relations beeween gold and silver using countries. The question is doubtless important; but since the arrangement for closing the mints in India its importance to the British Empire has diminished.

Northern Transvaal Railway.

SIR ROBERT HERMON-HODGE (Oxfordshire, Henley): To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether the Government intend to take over the bonds of the Northern Railway of the South African Republic, as recommended by the Transvaal Concessions Commission; and if so, at what date.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Chamberlain.*) I am not yet prepared to make a definite statement on this subject pending the conclusion of certain litigation now proceeding in this country.

Exaction of Tolls by Native Chiefs at Ibadan.

MR. BUCHANAN (Perthshire, E.): To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he has declined to sanction the proposal of the Governor of Lagos to permit under regulation the exaction of tolls by native chiefs at Ibadan and elsewhere in the colony; and if so, will he state by what other method he proposes to maintain in the future the system of local government under the chiefs.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Chamberlain.*) The proposals, which relate only to Abrokuta and Ibadan, have been sanctioned.

Improvements of Transvaal Central Railway.

MR. BUCHANAN: To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether an arrangement has been come to between the Transvaal Government and the military authorities as to the amount to be paid by the former for repairs and improvements to the Central African Railways; and, if so, what is the amount to be paid to the military authorities out of the loan.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Chamberlain.*) No arrangement has yet been arrived at. The matter is under discussion between the Colonial Office and the War Office.

Canadian Duty on English Wool.

MR. DUNCAN (Yorkshire, W. R., Otley): To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if he is aware that the Dominion of Canada by their present tariff imposed an import duty equal to 12 per cent. *ad valorem* on English wool, but admits foreign wools free; and, if so, if he will make representations to the Canadian Government for the removal of this preference.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Chamberlain.*) The Canadian tariff imposes on wools such as are grown in Canada a duty of 3 cents per pound if the produce of foreign countries, and of 2 cents per pound when the produce of the United Kingdom. Wool and the hair of the camel, alpaca goat, and other like animals, not further prepared than washed, with the exception stated are admitted free.

Pensions for Widows of Soldiers killed in time of Peace.

MR. KEARLEY (Devonport): To ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the widows and children of soldiers who lose their lives by accident whilst on duty will receive a similar recognition as regards pension to that recently conceded to sailors and marines.

(*Answered by Mr. A. J. Balfour.*) The answer is in the affirmative.

Situation of Proposed Victoria Memorial.

MR. LAWRENCE (Liverpool, Abercromby): To ask the hon. Member for West Derbyshire, as representing the First Commissioner of Works, whether his attention has been drawn to the fact that in the proposed Victoria Memorial there are planned five turns or corners within a very short space for all vehicular traffic to pass; and whether having regard to the present traffic and that in future to come direct from Charing Cross, it is in contemplation to open to the public the main avenue of the Mall.

(*Answered by Mr. Victor Cavendish.*) The First Commissioner is aware that the road as now being temporarily laid out necessitates more turns than is desirable. It is in contemplation, when the extension of the Mall to Charing Cross is completed, to open the main avenue to the public, when the greater width of the road will provide for such increase of traffic as may be expected.

Repatriation of Coolies Exported for Labour.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): To ask the Secretary of State for India, in view of the fact that in the contracts made with coolies for labour in Assam there is no stipulation for repatriation, and that few are ever able to return to their homes at the end of the term of contract for want of funds, will he consider the expediency of recommending the Government of India to take such steps as may be necessary to secure arrangements for repatriation in all labour contracts of this character.

(*Answered by Secretary Lord George Hamilton.*) I do not admit that coolies who emigrate to Assam are ordinarily unable to return home for want of funds, and I see no necessity for making the recommendation suggested to the Government of India.

Coolies in Assam.

MR. WEIR: To ask the Secretary of State for India if he will state the number of coolies recruited for labour in Assam for each year from 1898 to 1902, inclusive.

(*Answered by Secretary Lord George Hamilton.*) The Report for 1902 has not yet been received. The following are the figures of coolies imported into Assam for labour on tea and other estates for the other years mentioned:—

	1898.	1899.	1900.	1901.
Adults -	35,516	25,872	45,044	19,887
Children -	13,653	6,036	17,689	6,336
Total -	49,169	31,908	62,733	26,223

Detention of Sirdar and Coolies on Eastern Bengal Railway.

MR. WEIR: To ask the Secretary of State for India if he will ask the Government of India to ascertain from the local authorities under what circumstances a sirdar with fifty coolies, when travelling to a labour contractor in February, 1902, was stopped by the native police at Parbatipur Junction, on the Eastern Bengal Railway, detained two and a half days, and required to pay money to the native police before he could proceed on his journey; and will steps be taken to stop this system on the part of native police at railway stations in India.

(*Answered by Secretary Lord George Hamilton.*) I have nothing to add to my answer to the hon. Member's Question on this subject given on the 22nd instant.† The matter should be represented to the local authorities direct by the person or persons aggrieved.

Publication of Mr. Robertson's Report on Indian Railways.

MR. ASHTON (Bedfordshire, Luton): To ask the Secretary of State for India if it is his intention to publish in this country the Report of Mr. Thomas Robertson, the Special Commissioner sent to India to report on the Indian railways; and if so, when it will be procurable.

(*Answered by Secretary Lord George Hamilton.*) I stated on the 2nd instant, in reply to a Question,‡ that I hoped that copies of Mr. Robertson's Report would shortly be distributed. A considerable number of copies have now been received from India, and they will be distributed without delay.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxxv., 1342.

‡ See (4) *Debates*, cxxiv., 1174.

Outbreak of Cholera and Typhus at Quetta.

MR. SCHWANN (Manchester, N.): To ask the Secretary of State for India, has any report been received from the chief medical officer at Quetta, or through the political department at Simla, regarding the outbreak of typhus fever amongst the workmen on the Nushki-Seistan Railway route, and cases of cholera at Quetta; and can some report be presented showing what progress has been made with the earthwork on that desert route, describing the sanitary conditions and the question as to water supply that is likely to affect the construction of the line and the future facilities for traffic such as the Nushki-Seistan Railway is intended to offer.

(*Answered by Secretary Lord George Hamilton.*) A railway is being constructed from Quetta to Nushki, but no proposal for its extension from Nushki towards Seistan has been made or sanctioned. I have no information as to the prevalence of epidemics among the workers on the Quetta-Nushki Railway, but I have heard that there is an epidemic of typhus at Quetta and in other parts of Baluchistan. Cholera is also reported near Quetta and at Nushki.

Durbhanga Case.

MR. SCHWANN: To ask the Secretary of State for India whether his attention has been called to the Durbhanga case, in which Babu Chandi Persad, a Rajput gentleman of high caste and social position, was cast into prison on the information of a certain Mr. Miller that Chandi Persad had threatened to assault him, by Mr. M. B. Heycock district magistrate, who asked the prisoner for fifty sureties of 1,000 rupees, and refused those offered by the most respectable men in the neighbourhood; and whether, seeing that Chandi Persad was only released on the order of the High Court, he will cause Mr. Heycock to be removed to some other district.

(*Answered by Secretary Lord George Hamilton.*) I have no information as to the circumstances referred to in the Question, but I have no doubt that the local government and the Viceroy will take any action that may seem to be called for.

Secondary Schools—Superficial Area per Scholar.

COLONEL BOWLES (Middlesex, Enfield): To ask the Secretary to the Board of Education on what grounds the Board of Education now require a superficial space of 18 square feet per pupil as regards secondary schools, in view of the fact that in the case of elementary schools 15 feet was allowed.

(*Answered by Sir William Anson.*) The requirement referred to is the result of careful investigation, and is made on the recommendation of the best authorities. The requirements of elementary schools and of secondary schools cannot properly be treated as being on the same basis.

Imports and Exports of United Kingdom, United States, Germany and France.

MR. MANSFIELD (Lincolnshire, Spalding): To ask the President of the Board of Trade will he give the total value of the exports and imports of the United Kingdom, the United States of America, Germany, and France for each year from 1892 to 1902, showing separately the value of foods, raw materials, and manufactured or partly manufactured articles, together with the amount of shipping (tonnage), and the population of each country during the same period.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) The particulars which the hon. Member requires, so far as they are available, will be found in the latest issue of the Statistical Abstract for Foreign Countries [Cd. 1237], in Tables 18, 4 and 1. A new issue of the Abstract is in preparation.

Irish National School Teachers' Pensions—Capital Sum in lieu of Pension.

MR. DEVLIN (Kilkenny, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state if a retired national teacher in receipt of a disablement pension elects to accept a capital sum in lieu of pension, the Superintendent of the Teachers' Pension Fund will pay him the capital sum (their other conditions being fulfilled) immediately on the expiration of one year from the date of his retirement, even though such retirement takes place other than the last day of a quarter; and whether he will arrange to have the capital sum paid as soon as the Lord Lieutenant and the Treasury sanction the pension, and the teacher agrees to commute it, instead of delaying it for a year.

(*Answered by Mr. Elliot.*) The superintendent of the National School Teachers' Superannuation Office has been advised that it would be illegal to commute a disablement pension until a year has elapsed from the date of the teacher's first receipt of the pension. The suggested abolition of the interval of a year would require the abrogation of No. 10 (3) of the Irish Teachers' Pension Rules, 1897, and I am unable to recommend this change.

Fishery Rights in Limerick.

MR. JOYCE (Limerick): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state how much money was paid to owners of fishery rights since the year 1834, between Castleconnell and the Lax Weir, Corbally, Limerick; can he state the parts of the river claimed for, and the names of the claimants; whether such claims were for total or partial loss, and the amount given in each case; whether any claims were disallowed, and, if so, what was the cause; can he give the names of those who were compensated for salmon fisheries, and those who were compensated for eel fisheries.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) I will endeavour to procure this information if it is practicable to do so. An examination of transactions over a period of seventy years will be necessary, and some time must elapse before I shall be in a position to communicate with the hon. Member.

Irish Education—Case of William Boyle.

MR. MACVEAGH (Down, S.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state if the letter addressed to the Secretaries of the National Board of Education on 1st July, by the manager of the school, Roll No. 11,829, District No. 11, has ever been submitted to the Board, and, if so, on what date; and whether he can state what allowance has been made by the Board in view of the exceptional circumstances of the case.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) I am informed that the letter is a repetition of letters which had been already fully considered. So far back as April, 1901, the manager was told, after a special investigation of the complaints of the teacher (William Boyle), that the Board had no power to make good out of the public funds loss of income which the teacher alleged he sustained through local causes. It is not intended to submit the letter of the 1st instant specially to the Board.

Maryborough Heath Rifle Range.

MR. KENNEDY (Westmeath, N.): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that on the 25th instant an officer attached to the Westmeath Militia was dangerously wounded during target practice at the butts on Maryborough Heath; and whether he will cause steps to be taken to protect those there engaged.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*) A Court of Inquiry on this matter is now sitting. Special instructions had been issued and notices posted warning persons concerned that the earth wall connecting the butts was not bullet proof.

Accommodation at Whale Island Naval Barracks.

SIR JOHN COLOMB (Great Yarmouth): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty what is the accommodation for officers, petty officers, and men in the naval barracks at Whale Island, and what was the number of officers, petty officers, and men sleeping in the barracks on the night of 27th July this year.

(*Answered by Mr. Arnold-Forster.*) The accommodation for officers and men at Whale Island Naval Barracks is as follows:—Officers 74, warrant officers 39, petty officers and men 1,279, total, 1,392. The number who were actually victualled on the 27th inst., and who could have slept on the island that night, were:—Officers 29, petty officers and men 629, total, 658. The numbers actually sleeping on the island on the night of the 27th inst. were :—Officers 7, warrant officers 3, petty officers and men 403, total, 413. The small numbers are accounted for by the fact that the Naval Manœuvres were about to commence.

Gosport Water Supply.

MR. ARTHUR LEE (Hampshire, Fareham): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether, in view of the fact that the Gosport water supply has been condemned as unfit for domestic use, and on that account forbidden to be used as formerly on board His Majesty's ships, he will state what steps are now being taken to procure a proper supply for the naval establishments situated in the Gosport district, including the barracks occupied by the Gosport Division of the Royal Marines.

(*Answered by Mr. Arnold-Forster.*) The Admiralty have for some time past been pressing the local authority (the Gosport and Alverstoke Urban District Council) to take action in this matter. The Council have now appointed a special Committee to deal with the question, and it is understood that action will be taken, if necessary, under the Public Health Act of 1875. It is thought desirable to await the result of these proceedings before considering the advisability of taking independent action.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Cork Harbour—Soldiers' Fatigue Duties.

GENERAL LAURIE (Pembroke and Haverfordwest): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether his attention has been called to the almost continuous employment of a large portion of the troops stationed at Cork Harbour as working parties or on fatigue duties; and whether, seeing that these troops are mostly young soldiers serving a three years' engagement, during which period continuous military training is required to make them efficient soldiers, he can see his way either to raise additional garrison regiments composed of thoroughly trained soldiers, to be utilised at this and similar stations, and who can undertake such duties, or to employ civilian labour on this work, and thus allow young soldiers to receive a proper training.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Lord STANLEY, Lancashire, Westhoughton): Administrative duties such as fatigues necessarily form part of a soldier's duties, but the military authorities are quite alive to the necessity of ensuring that the utmost possible of a soldier's time is given up to the study of his profession, and instructions have been issued to reduce such duties to a minimum. I am afraid that the alterations suggested in the Question would prove too expensive.

Special Pay Warrant of 26th March, 1902.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War if he will state whether the words "after five years service in the rank of captain, £1,000 gratuity," which appear in paragraph 556 of the Special Pay Warrant issued 26th March 1902, apply to all captains of the Royal Army Medical Corps, irrespective of whether they were commissioned before the date of this warrant.

LORD STANLEY: Yes, Sir.

Australian Squadron.

MR. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty if he will state the cost of the ships that are to comprise the Australian Squadron and the sum which must be added annually for depreciation.

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER, Belfast, W.): I am informed that the agreement with reference to the Australian Squadron has not yet been ratified by the Commonwealth Senate, and it is therefore impossible to say what will be the precise constitution of the squadron on the station. I am consequently not in a position at present to give the details for which the hon. Member asks.

The Colonies and Preferential Tariffs.

SIR M. HICKS BEACH (Bristol, W.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether, in the discussion of preferential tariffs at the Colonial Conference in 1902, the representatives of Australia, New Zealand, the Cape, and Natal expressed the opinion that the preferential treatment of British goods which they were prepared to recommend to their respective Parliaments might be given without any reciprocal concession of the same kind by the mother country, while the representative of Canada admitted that it would be most difficult for the mother country to impose new duties in order to make such concessions, and merely asked whether they could not be made on duties already existing in the British tariff if the preference already given by Canada were made more complete and effective.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN, Birmingham, W.): So far as the discussions at the Conference are concerned the statement in the Question is correct, but the Resolutions ultimately passed went much further, and urged on His Majesty's Government the expediency of granting in the United Kingdom preferential treatment to the produce and manufactures of the colonies either by exemption from or reduction of duties now or hereafter imposed. The Finance Minister of Canada, in introducing his Budget into the Dominion, has since stated, "If, after further consideration, they come to the conclusion that our request is not a reasonable one; if, owing to their adherence to certain views, they cannot grant us a preference, we shall be free to take our own course. Whether in such a case it would be wise in the interests of Canada to modify or change the preferential tariff would be a question to be considered. But putting aside other considerations, if the British Government and people do not show any appreciation of the value of the preference, then so far as the British Government and people are concerned, they cannot complain if we see fit to modify or change that preferential tariff." In the Memorandum laid before the Conference by the Canadian Ministers, they stated that if they could be assured that the Imperial Government would accept the principle of preferential trade generally, and particularly grant to the food products of Canada in the United Kingdom exemptions from duties now levied or hereinafter imposed they, the Canadian Ministers, would be prepared to go further into the subject and endeavour to give to the British manufacturer some increased advantage over his foreign competitors in the markets of Canada.

SIR M. HICKS BEACH: I wish to ask a Question arising out of that Answer. I think the House will see that there is a very important difference between the statements made by the representatives of the colonies in the discussion at the Conference and both the Canadian Memorandum and the Resolutions finally agreed to, and what I would ask my right hon. friend is whether he does not think it would be almost necessary for the proper discussion of this matter that the public should be in possession of the report of the discussion on this subject at the Conference. My right hon. friend has already stated to the House that he is unable to present that report, not because he himself objects, but because, I think, only one colony has objected to its publication. Will he not endeavour to remove that objection and give us the report?

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I do not agree with the statement of my right hon friend that there is any substantial difference between what was published as to what took place at the Conference and what was understood to be private. My right hon. friend, however, is entirely right in saying that no objection whatever has come from me in regard to the publication of everything that took place in our discussions. The objection came from the representatives of the colonies, and, in spite of my suggestion that the whole of the proceedings should be published, some of them declined to give assent to what, after all, was apparently a reasonable consideration. This was, that at the outset it had been stated that these discussions would be private unless subsequently it was desired to publish them, and that they had expressed themselves perhaps more freely and with less reserve than they would have done if they had known that everything was hereafter to be published. That is the present position, and I am bound in good faith—in fact, I have absolutely no alternative—not to publish what any of the colonial representatives desire to remain secret. If my right hon. friend desires it, I have no objection to state his wish to the Prime Ministers of the colonies who were present, and ask them if they are now ready to withdraw their objection.

Hong-Kong Plague.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if he will state on what date the system of inoculation with Haffkine's plague prophylactic was brought into operation in Hong-Kong, the number of persons inoculated, and how many have since succumbed to plague.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I have no information on the point, but will ask the Governor for a report.

Trinidad Disturbances.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he is aware that in the Report of the Commission of Inquiry into the recent Water Ordinance disturbances at Port of Spain, Trinidad, it is stated that there is not, as in India and the colonies in the East, a preliminary inquiry through the executive officers of the Government as to the merits of a Bill, or consultation with members of the public likely to be interested in a Bill as to how the proposed law will work; and, in view of this statement, will he say whether he proposes to consider the desirability of introducing some alteration in the legislative procedure in Trinidad.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I have already instructed the Governor to introduce the necessary changes.

Fiji.

MR. CATHCART WASON: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if the Governor of Fiji will inquire into the circumstances which led to the deportation of six high chiefs of Fiji, namely, Ratu Ambrose, Tui Suva, Ratu Savenca, Vere Balavu, Emori Turaga Vakacava, and Alwale; and will he state also upon what grounds the Administrator wrote that during his administration he had not found it necessary to deport any high chiefs.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I have already received full reports on the circumstances which led to the deportation of the chiefs to whom the hon. Member refers. They were deported on the grounds that they were active in hampering the work of the local native officials, advising the natives to cease paying taxes, and spreading disaffection. I am informed by Sir H. Jackson that these six men are petty chiefs, not to be compared with the chiefs of the leading Provinces.

MR. CATHCART WASON: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if the Government of Fiji will inquire into the reasons for the imprisonment of Fijian natives other than for having signed a respectful petition to His Majesty praying for redress of their wrongs.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: If the hon. Member will specify any cases in which Fijian natives have been imprisoned on the real or ostensible ground that they signed a petition to His Majesty, I will inquire into them.

MR. CATHCART WASON: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if the Governor of Fiji will inquire into the flogging of a native named Josephata, and if he will state upon what grounds the Administrator suspended the medical officer who reported the circumstance; and, seeing that it is strictly laid down that no native shall be flogged except in the presence of a Government medical officer, what circumstances have been reported to justify an exception in the case of the said Josephata.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: The Commissioner of Lomaiviti and the Chiefs forming the Court were censured by the Administrator for the irregularity of the proceedings in this case. Dr. Hallen, the medical officer, to whom the hon. Member refers, was suspended upon grounds entirely unconnected with the flogging of Josephata—viz., for being absent from duty without leave, and for engaging in business contrary to the express instructions of the Government.

Faroe Islands.

Mr. CATHCART WASON: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade if his attention has been directed to the Report issued by the Foreign Office on the Trade and Laws of the Faroe Islands; and, if so, if he will consider the advisability of subsidising an occasional steamer from Lerwick with the view of developing trade with the islands.

The PRESIDENT of the BOARD of TRADE (Mr. Gerald Balfour, Leeds, Central): I have seen the Report referred to, but I am not able to concur in the suggestion of a subsidised service made in the latter part of the hon. Member's Question.

Certificated Pilots of Foreign Nationality.

Mr. ORR-EWING (Ayr Burghs): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he can state the number of foreign subjects who hold certificates as pilots at ports in Great Britain and Ireland, and the number at each port; and whether he can say if any foreign country grants certificates as pilots to British subjects.

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: From information received by the Board of Trade last year from pilotage authorities it appears that at that time there were seventy-three masters and mates holding pilotage certificates who were foreign subjects; of these forty-four were in the London district, ten in the Trinity House outport districts, seventeen at Hull, one at King's Lynn and one in the Clyde. I am informed by the Foreign Office that in France, Marseilles is the only place where pilotage certificates are granted to British masters of vessels. I have no information as to the practice in other countries.

*General LAURIE: Does the right hon. Gentleman propose to take any action on this matter?

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: Not as at present advised.

Glasgow Railway Accident.

Mr. ORR EWING: I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade, whether his attention has been called to the fact that in the railway accident at St. Enoch Station, Glasgow, on 27th July, by which fifteen persons were killed and twenty seriously injured, all these casualties took place in two carriages next the engine, only a shred of the framework of the second carriage being left, whereas the rest of the train escaped without damage; and whether he will consider issuing a regulation that the two carriages next the engine must be luggage vans or dummy carriages.

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR: I have not yet received the Report of the officer appointed to hold an inquiry as to this accident. His attention shall be directed to the terms of my hon. friend's Question.

Government Motor-Car Drivers.

*General LAURIE: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the Government employees are exempt from the provisions of the law relative to the use of motor-cars; and, if they are so exempt, whether the individual employee will be held personally responsible for any injury he may cause to life or limb or property; or whether the head of the Department to which he belongs will assume all responsibility to meet any claims for such injury.

*The UNDER SECRETARY of STATE for the HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. Cochrane, Ayrshire, N.): I apprehend that the general rule that the Crown is not bound by the provisions of a statute unless named therein would not extend to exempt a Government employee from personal liability for damage caused by his own negligence. But any claim for compensation out of public funds in any such case could only be met as an act of grace and favour, and the decision would depend upon the circumstances of the particular case.

*General LAURIE: In the case of such damage, who will be the person to be sued? Will it be the head of the Department?

*Mr. COCHRANE: I am afraid I can add nothing to my answer.

Metropolitan Police Fund.

Mr. CLAUDE HAY (Shoreditch, Hoxton): I beg to ask the Secretary of

State for the Home Department, what was the balance of moneys in hand shown in the Estimates on which the police precepts dated 1st July, 1903, were based; what rate in the £ upon the Metropolitan Police District is represented by such working balance; and what proportion such working balance bears to the whole estimated expenditure for the purposes of the police shown in the Estimate.

*Mr. COCHRANE: The balance of moneys in the hands of the Receiver for the Metropolitan Police District on the 1st July, 1903, amounted to £114,694, 4s. 6d. This amount is equivalent to a rate of ·567d. in the £; and it represents about 21/365 of the estimated expenditure for the year.

Ecclesiastical Grants.

Mr. BRYNMOR JONES (Swansea District): I beg to ask the hon. Member for West Salford, as Church Estates Commissioner, whether the Ecclesiastical Commissioners make any inquiries, before assigning any grant or benefaction to a parish, as to the conformity by the incumbent thereof to the Ecclesiastical Law; and whether, in view of alleged illegal practices among a section of the clergy, he is prepared to give, on behalf of the Commissioners, assurances to this House that grants and benefactions of whatever kind will be restricted by them to those clergy who render obedience to the Book of Common Prayer, the Articles of Religion, and the Law as determined by the Courts having statutory jurisdiction in matters ecclesiastical.

The PARLIAMENTARY CHARITY COMMISSIONER (Mr. Lees Knowles, Salford, W.): The Ecclesiastical Commissioners make no such inquiries as are suggested in this Question. Grants out of their Common Fund are (with the exception of some curate grants) of a permanent nature, and not made on the ground of the personal claims or merits of the particular incumbent who happens to hold the benefice for the time being.

Hyde Park Ambulances.

Mr. CLAUDE HAY: I beg to ask the hon. Member for West Derbyshire, as representing the First Commissioner of Works, whether the St. John's ambulances in Hyde Park have been decided upon as being as satisfactory as the Metropolitan Police ambulances in Hyde Park; and whether he will state the result of the promised inquiry as to the number of and positions in which ambulances are placed in Hyde Park, having regard to recent accidents to horsemen and others.

Mr. VICTOR CAVENDISH (Derbyshire, W.): The St. John's ambulances in Hyde Park have been inspected by Sir William Bennett, who reports that they are not only quite as satisfactory as the Metropolitan Police ambulances, but, owing to their lightness and simplicity, best suited for the purposes of work in Hyde Park. There are now ambulances at Alexandra Gate, Hyde Park Corner, the Marble Arch, and the Police Station.

Achonry (Sligo) Schools.

Mr. O'DOWD (Sligo, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, in view of the fact that the former teacher of Achonry National School, county Sligo, was dismissed for incompetence by the National Board in June, 1899; that the manager neglected to appoint another teacher, with the result that the school was struck off the rolls, and the boys of the neighbourhood were obliged to go to the girls' school, against the wishes of parents and clergy; that a new school was opened by the parish priest in June, 1902, to which a qualified teacher was appointed, and at which, since that period, the average attendance has been about forty-five; if he will explain why this school has not yet been recognised by the National Board, in view of the resolution from the managers of the diocese of Achonry protesting against the action of the Board, and demanding that the school be recognised.

The CHIEF SECRETARY for IRELAND (Mr. Wyndham, Dover): The teacher was not dismissed. Grants to the male school were withdrawn because it failed to maintain an average of twenty pupils. The female school was thereupon recognised as a mixed school. The application made by the parish priest in respect of the school recently opened by him was considered by the Commissioners in April. They decided to withhold aid to this school on the ground that it was unsuitable, and that the existing mixed school had satisfied the educational requirements of the locality for some years.

Fitzmaurice Estates.

MR. LUNDON (Limerick, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if any negotiations are at present pending as between the representatives of the Fitzmaurice property and the tenants on the lands of Coolnadown and Cloghaready, county Limerick; and whether the part of the property in Queen's County has as yet been totally disposed of.

MR. WYNDHAM: The Land Judge has no knowledge of any negotiations such as are suggested in the Question. On the 23rd of March † I stated that the Queen's County portion of this estate had been inspected pursuant to Section 40 of the Act of 1896. The report of the inspection cannot be considered by the Land Judge until after the long vacation.

Killan Dispensary Doctor.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the Ballinasloe Board of Guardians failed to procure a medical officer for the Killan dispensary district at the salary of £120 per annum; and if so, can he say whether any medical men stated to that Board in writing at what salary they would be willing to accept office, and, if so, at what amount; and whether he can say how many vacancies exist at present in the Irish dispensary service, and for what period has each district been vacant; what fees are being paid per week to the temporary medical officers in charge of these districts; how much per week is paid in advertising the vacancies in each union; and how much of the total cost of *locum tenens* fees and advertisements is refunded by the Treasury to the guardians in each case.

MR. WYNDHAM: The vacancy in Ballinasloe Union was created on the 20th June, The guardians advertised for a medical officer at a salary of £120 a year. Two gentlemen offered their services at £200 a year. The guardians, however, decided to re-advertise at the former salary. There are eight other vacancies; two occurred in November last, the remaining six are of very recent occurrence. Temporary medical officers are usually paid £4 4s. a week. The cost of advertisements is not officially known. Recoupment is made in respect only of approved salary.

MR. DELANY (Queen's County, Ossory) asked whether the right hon. Gentleman was able to say whether these vacancies continued in consequence of the action of the Irish Medical Association using intimidation against medical practitioners in Ireland and preventing them from taking up appointments?

MR. WYNDHAM did not know that intimidation was the proper word to use in this matter. There had been speeches made and resolutions passed suggesting that no medical officer should accept any of these appointments without a salary of £200 a year. He knew that medical officers in Ireland had a good deal to do, and that their salaries were not high. He thought, however, that their claims would be more deserving of recognition if they abandoned the practice, and awaited the result of the Viceregal Commission which was now inquiring into the amalgamation of Unions and Poor Law questions.

Licences to sell Arms in North Tipperary.

MR. P. J. O'BRIEN (Tipperary, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that Mr. James Harkness, of Nenagh, North Tipperary, by trade a gunsmith, made application recently to the resident magistrate there for a licence to sell arms and ammunition, and that such application was refused; and whether, in view of the fact that there are only two licences for the sale of arms and ammunition in the district, and practically no one engaged in the repairing of arms, he will explain why this man has been prohibited from carrying on his trade, at which up to this he has been engaged as manager for his mother, lately deceased.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxix., 1469.

MR. WYNDHAM: I have already given this matter my personal consideration in consequence of communications privately received from the hon. Member. The authority to issue a licence to sell arms and ammunition is vested by law in the resident magistrate of the district. There are already two licensed vendors of arms in Nenagh, one of whom executes repairs, and these in his opinion, confirmed as it is by the local police, are ample for the requirements of the district.

MR. P. J. O'BRIEN: Why is not this man permitted to carry on his legitimate trade?

MR. WYNDHAM: I have said that the police think two licensed vendors in Nenagh to be sufficient.

MR. P. J. O'BRIEN: I do not think so, and shall take an early opportunity of calling attention to this scandalous state of affairs.

Clergy Discipline Bill.

*MR. CHARLES M'ARTHUR (Liverpool, Exchange): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the Government will introduce next session a Bill to make further provision for enforcing discipline in cases of offences committed by clerymen against the laws ecclesiastical.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): I am not in a position to make any statement on this subject to my hon. friend at the present moment.

St. Jude's, Birmingham.

MR. BRYNMOR JONES: To ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether any correspondence has taken place between him and the Bishop of Worcester in regard to the alleged illegal practices of the incumbent of St. Jude's, Birmingham; and, if so, whether he will lay the correspondence upon the Table of the House.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I think the hon. and learned Gentleman somewhat mistakes my functions in this matter. I do my best, in recommending clergymen for preferment in the gift of the Crown, to make the selection which will be in the best interests of the parishes in which they have to work. But, once appointed, I have no control over them. No duty lies upon me, nor is it possible that any duty should lie upon me, to investigate their subsequent behaviour or to hold any official correspondence either with the Bishop or anybody else in their regard.

Licensing Legislation.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether it is proposed to give special facilities for either of the Bills on the Order Paper interfering with the discretion of the justices in the granting of licences for the sale of intoxicating liquors.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have explained to the House on many occasions that it would be impossible for me to give facilities to any private Member's Bill which was of a controversial character. There is no doubt that the two Bills, to which my hon. friend refers, whatever their other merits may be, are of a controversial character, and therefore it would be quite impossible or me to violate the well-understood Rule, on the maintenance of which depends a great deal of the dignity and expedition of our proceedings at the end of the session.

SIR WILFRED LAWSON (Cornwall, Camborne): When will the right hon. Gentleman make his promised statement on this subject?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: If the hon. Baronet will put down a Question next week I will answer it.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

Sir H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs): Can the right hon. Gentleman indicate the course of business next week? Will he state the general order in which he proposes to take the Bills that remain to be dealt with?

Mr. LOUGH (Islington, W.): And will he also kindly state when he proposes to take the Committee stage of the Sugar Convention Bill, in which great interest is felt?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: To-night, after 12 o'clock, I hope to take the Report of the Public Offices Resolution and the Second Readings of the Public Works Loans, Public Buildings Expenses, and Sheep Scab Bills. None of these are likely to give rise to serious discussion. The Committee stage of the Irish Development Grant Bill, in regard to which an arrangement has been come to which meets the views of all parties, the Military Works Bill, and the Naval Works Bill, will be the principal work of to-morrow. I understand the last Bill will not take any time, but the Military Works Bill will no doubt lead to debate. The South African Loan Bill, the Employment of Children Bill, and the Patriotic Fund Bill will also be put down. On Monday, in Supply, I propose to take the Army Estimates, the Civil Services and Supplementary Estimates. It will be necessary to introduce two new Supplementary Votes, one in connection with President Loubet's visit to this country, and the other in connection with the Irish Development Grant Bill, which has been taken off the Consolidated Fund and put on the Estimates. These Supplementary Estimates cannot be taken within the hours of an allotted day. They must be put down for after twelve o'clock, and I shall have to move a Resolution to that effect. On Tuesday, as at present advised, I shall take the Second Reading of the Motor-Car Bill and the Committee stage of the Sugar Convention Bill. I think there is a general agreement that the motor-car question should be dealt with before the House rises, and, though there may be a lengthened discussion in Committee, I do not think the Second Reading ought to take long. Perhaps I may be allowed to leave the latter part of the week for a subsequent statement.

Mr. LOUGH: I hope the right hon. Gentleman will carry out the arrangement that the Sugar Bill shall not be taken after midnight. We want to have a fair discussion before twelve o'clock.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I hope there will be plenty of time to discuss it before midnight. I am anxious that as much as possible of the debate on the Sugar Convention Bill shall take place before midnight, and, as far as lies in my power, I will see that that is done, but I cannot give any pledge on the subject.

Mr. MACVEAGH (Down, S.): When does the right hon. Gentleman propose to take the Expiring Laws Continuance Bill?

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I hope that Bill will be taken on an early day next week.

Dr. FARQUHARSON (Aberdeenshire, W.) reminded the Prime Minister that on 2nd July some fifteen Votes (including the Local Government Board) were passed without debate, and expressed a hope that some opportunity would be afforded for discussing them on Report.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: They are down for to-night.

Mr. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis): Can the First Lord of the Treasury say when the agreements with the Morgan Shipping Line and the Cunard Company, which, I understand, have been concluded, will be submitted to the House for discussion.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: No, Sir. My hon. friend is right in saying that the agreements have been concluded, and, therefore, they are ripe for discussion in this House, but it is not easy for me, at the present moment, to find a day for that discussion.

Mr. WHITLEY (Halifax) asked if an opportunity would be given to discuss the Law Officers Vote, and

Sir CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): asked as to the Army Votes.

Mr. A. J. BALFOUR: I will endeavour through the ordinary channels to find out in what order it will be most convenient to take the remaining Votes.

WORKMEN'S TRAINS.

Report from the Select Committee, with Minutes of Evidence and an Appendix brought up, and read [Inquiry not completed].

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 297.]

NEW BILLS.

BELFAST (PETTY SESSIONS COURT) BILL.

"For the better administration of Law in the Petty Sessions Courts of Belfast, Ireland," presented by Mr. Joseph Devlin; supported by Mr. Haviland-Burke, Mr. MacVeagh, Mr. Flynn, and Mr. Kilbride; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 302.]

CHARITABLE LOAN SOCIETIES (IRELAND) BILL.

"To amend the Charitable Loan Societies (Ireland) Act, 1900," presented by Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 303.]

PILOTAGE BILL.

"To amend the Law relating to Pilotage, so as to terminate the granting of Pilotage Certificates to masters or mates of vessels not registered at a port in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland," presented by Sir Seymour King; supported by Mr. Runciman, Sir Penrose FitzGerald, Major Seely, Mr. James Reid, Sir John Colomb, Major Evans-Gordon, General Laurie, and Mr. Joyce; to be read a second time upon Thursday next, and to be printed. [Bill 304.]

SUPPLY [20th Allotted Day].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. J. W. Lowther (Cumberland, Penrith) in the Chair.]

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS ESTIMATES, 1903-4.

Class II.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £26,500, be granted to His Majesty to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1904, for the salaries and expenses of the Department of His Majesty's Secretary of State for the Colonies, including a grant in aid of certain expenses connected with emigration."

Mr. MARKHAM (Nottinghamshire, Mansfield) rose to move to reduce the salary of the Secretary of State for the Colonies by £5,000. He admitted that in the critical state of South Africa at the present time considerable responsibility attached to every hon. Member who initiated a debate on South African affairs, but realising as he did how absolutely ignorant the House was of the present condition of affairs there, he felt it was his duty to tell hon. Members the truth in regard to that unhappy country. He first wished to call attention to the manner in which Lord Milner and his Government and the Colonial Secretary had dealt with the recent great discovery of diamonds in the Transvaal. He was not aware whether the Colonial Secretary had received any Report on this subject, as on two occasions the right hon. Gentleman had given evasive replies to his Questions. He should, however, assume that the right hon. Gentleman had received such a Report. He would state briefly the charges he made against Lord Milner, and would then proceed to amplify them by quotation. His first charge was that Lord Milner, on the discovery of these great diamond fields, had reserved them entirely for a syndicate of financiers, and had shut out the general public from participation, with the stated object of creating a monopoly in diamonds, and preventing a fall in their price. He had a word or two to say about the value of this discovery, because, for some reason unknown to him, the subject had been boycotted by the Press of this country. In South Africa there was only one topic, the value of this discovery; but in this country practically no report had appeared in any of the leading newspapers with the exception of the *Daily News.* Sir A. Lawley, speaking to the Transvaal Legislative Council some months ago, said—

> "Investigations have brought to light the existence of a diamond field which bids fair to rival in richness, if not excel, any field which has hitherto been discovered. Among the most important measures which will be submitted for your consideration is an Ordinance to amend the existing Diamond Law, No. 22 of 1898, which is admitted by a general consensus of opinion to be unsatisfactory in many respects."

And again, Sir Percy Fitzpatrick, addressing the same Council on June 29th, used these words in connection with the value of the discovery—

> "There would be in the first 50 ft. alone of the Premier Mine upwards of eight millions sterling of profit. Under the present law the owner would be entitled to one million of this and the State to seven millions. Every eighth which they gave away was worth over a million."

Without going into detail, he would explain the provisions of the Gold Law of the late South African Republic. This law, which up to recently was the basis on which all precious stones and minerals were allocated, provided that when a discovery of diamonds was made on any farm, intimation should be given to the Government, which would proclaim the farm as public property, the owner being entitled to one-eighth and the rest being thrown open for the general public, rich and poor alike — millionaire and pauper being equally entitled to participate in the wealth of the country. What had Lord Milner done in this case? Instead of at one proclaiming this mine open, he had deliberately increased the owners' share from one-eighth to four-tenths of the whole area, and had reserved the right in his own hands of letting out the rest of the mine to the same owners, with the avowed object of keeping out the public and artificially raising the price of diamonds. In the Legislative Assembly, on June 17, when the Ordinance was introduced, the Attorney-General, Sir Richard Solomon —against whose honour and integrity he had not a word to say, except that as he had been associated all his life with the De Beers Company, and as their legal adviser was connected with the late Mr. Rhodes, and he therefore feared he had simply followed in the lines laid down by his friend Mr. Rhodes—used the following words—

> "The late Mr. Rhodes saw perfectly well that the only way to save the diamond industry in Kimberley was to amalgamate the different companies working claims in Griqualand West, so as to bring the mines under one control, and thus regulate the output of diamonds, seeing that the world could only take a certain amount of diamonds during the year. One of the lessons—one of the most important lessons —taught them by the diamond mining in Griqualand West was this; to keep their diamond mines as much as possible under one control. That, he ventured to say, was an axiom the Government had endeavoured to give effect to as far as possible in this Ordinance."

On the 29th of the same month Sir Richard Solomon said—

> "The world could only take a certain quantity. The output must be restricted, and if they sent out all the diamonds they could produce they would bring down the price. In gold mining they could put out as much gold as they liked and they did not affect the price, but in diamond mining it was different, and any mines discovered there would have to reckon with the output in Griqualand West, and restrict their output accordingly. If they exceeded the world's demand, down would come the price, and away would go the value of their property."

And again, with reference to the profits of the diamond mining, Sir Richard later on the same day said—

> "The guiding principle was that the mine, as much as possible, should be under the control of one person or company. When they found that the owner of land on which diamonds were found had a large interest, it was surely better for the Government to try and make some agreement with the owner than that another person should do so, and thus destroy the principle for which they were contending."

He hoped that hon. Members would bear those words in mind. Sir George Farrar, one of Lord Milner's nominated representatives on the Council on June 17th, said—

> "He (Sir George Farrar) was not in any way interested in diamond mining in South Africa, and therefore he thought he was entitled to express an unprejudiced opinion. He quite agreed that under Law XII. of 1898, the owner's rights in the diamond mining industry were certainly very restricted, and that more liberal treatment was necessary."

And again—

> "Whether the Government had gone too far he was not prepared at the present moment to express an opinion, but what he did know was that diamond mining was quite different from gold mining, and the control of one monopoly must be created."

Mr. Hull, who was a solicitor to some of the De Beers directors, used these words on the same occasion—

> "Any criticisms which were directed at this Ordinance should be in the direction that the Government had given too little to the owner, and when they got to the Committee stage he intended to move an Amendment to the effect that the owner's rights should be further increased."

Not satisfied with giving the owners four-tenths instead of one-eighth, to which only they were entitled under the old law, Lord Milner proceeded to still further increase their rights. Mr. Bourke, a shareholder, I believe, in the mine, on June 17th, said he was unable adequately to express the satisfaction he felt from a perusal of the Ordinance and from the remarks which had fallen from the Attorney-General, and he went on to describe the creation of the monopoly in South Africa. He said—

> "The Government, immediately an area was proclaimed, would enter into possession of six-tenths of any particular area which was diamondiferous, and they proposed under the clause referred to to hand that over or leave it to the owner, or persons representing the owner, who possessed the other four-tenths. If they had five or six mines dealt with in the same way, they lost the single control that was absolutely essential to maintain the value of diamonds."

There they had a definite statement that it was the object of the Transvaal Government to create a monopoly in diamonds. It was important to bear that in mind, for after all the House of Commons was the final arbiter on questions relating to legislation in South Africa so long as the Crown administration continued in that country. What did the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary for the Colonies say on the previous night? He said—

> "What is the ultimate object of a bounty? It is to secure a monopoly. Was the bounty in process of securing a monopoly? Yes, it was. Do you suppose the working people of this country are such fools as not to know that it would be worth almost any present sacrifice to prevent the creation of a monopoly of which ultimately they will be all victims?"

Yet the right hon. Gentleman's lieutenant in South Africa was—no doubt with his approval—urging the creation of a monopoly in South Africa—a monopoly which was absolutely contrary to the interests of South Africa. The Attorney-General, speaking to the Legislative Council on June 17th, said that—

> "They had provided that, in the first place, the Crown, not working the diamond mines itself, might make an agreement with the owner of the mine, and work it for the mutual benefit of the Crown and the owner, and to work it on such terms as might be directed by the Lieutenant-Governor, who will be advised by experts, and subject to statutory conditions embodied in the Ordinance."

There was the clear and definite issue of the intention of the Government and Lord Milner to create a monopoly, and to place the whole of this vast discovery in the hands of one syndicate.

In March, 1901, Sir D. Barbour made a report on the Finances of the Transvaal, the consideration of which at the present time he earnestly recommended to the Colonial Secretary. In that report the following passages occurred—

> "As regards any valuable mining rights which may exist in lands that have not hitherto been proclaimed as public diggings, or which have not been granted to private persons, it seems to me that it is still possible to take measures for protecting the interests of the State. For the past failure to safeguard the State assets for the benefit of the community there is now practically no remedy. On the other hand, it is beyond question that in some cases the law was modified, strained, and even violated, with the connivance of officials of the Transvaal Government, in order to secure illegitimate advantage for mining speculators and others. The principle which I recommend for adoption is this: that as the gold-mining rights in the Transvaal belong to the State, a large share of the profit should in future be reserved for the State, in all cases where these rights are known, or believed on good grounds to be, of special value."

Sir D. Barbour went on to say that—

> "The first measure to be adopted with this object would be the reduction of the privileges with regard to mining rights which had been granted to the owners of the land."

Instead of that advice being followed the rights were to be increased by 300 per cent. A few months ago Lord Milner appointed a Gold Commission. That body was fairly representative, both capitalists and working people being represented. The capitalists naturally reported in favour of the owners' rights remaining as they were under the old Transvaal Government, but the Minority Report, signed by all the representatives of the people not connected with the mining industry, advocated the reduction of the rights. The action of Lord Milner was wholly dictated by the desire to create a monopoly in diamonds. The price of diamonds to-day was approximately 50s. a carat, whereas before the amalgamation it was 10s. or 15s. The chairman of the New Jagersfontein Company speaking in Kimberley stated, on June 6, that the price of diamonds had increased during the last five years by 75 per cent., a result which had been brought about by the De Beers Company regulating the output. The De Beers Company produced 95 per cent. of the diamonds of the world, and had bought up practically all the mines in South Africa. He could not say definitely whether they had bought the Premier Mine, but he firmly believed they had. The company did not transact their affairs on the house-tops, but the shares, which would be of little value if the Premier Mine were thrown open, had not fallen in the market. The amount of money originally put into the company was very small; its present capital value was £40,000,000, and the annual profits were £2,500,000. In addition to that, they had by an arrangement with the Chartered Company, the pre-emption of all discoveries of diamonds in Rhodesia; nearly all the mines in Brazil belonged to them; in fact, practically the whole of the diamond mining industry of the world rested in the hands of this corporation. For sixteen years Kimberley was worked by individual claims; the owners of the surface received no privileges whatever; and South Africa was never more prosperous than when that practice obtained. In many respects diamond mining was the antithesis of gold mining. For the latter a large expenditure on machinery was required; for the former no machinery whatever was necessary. The answer of the Government to all the distress, poverty and misery in South Africa was to shut out the people from all participation in this valuable discovery, and to hand it over to a syndicate of financiers in order that the State might derive a larger revenue.

The view of the Government was absolutely illogical. Before the amalgamation of the mines in Kimberley there were, he believed, 50,000 people employed, whereas to-day the number was only 15,000. How was that state of things to be remedied? If the price of diamonds was reduced from 50s. to 10s. a carat an enormous profit would still be yielded to individual diggers working the Premier Mine. At Kimberley the yield per load was ¾ carat and the cost of mining 10s., deep mining being very expensive. But in the Premier Mine the surface ground could be washed at a cost of 2s. a load, and the returns so far yielded not ¾, but 1¾ carats per load, so that the diamonds, if sold in the free and open market, would give an enormous profit at even 5s. a carat. But supposing the price was reduced from 50s. to 10s., and only £5,000,000 worth of diamonds could be taken by the world—as argued by Lord Milner's Government—they could sell five times as many diamonds for the money. Surely that would be greatly to the benefit of the industry of South Africa, as five times as many people would need to be employed. He contended that it was outside the province of the Government to regulate monopolies, or in any way to give their assent to them. This Premier Mine would have been worked entirely by white labour, but through the action of the Government the compound system was to be established in Pretoria, and the mine worked by Kaffir labour, although there were thousands of white people out of work. Had this new discovery been thrown open it would have caused a rush to the fields, brought prosperity to those who were now suffering, and changed the whole aspect of the financial situation. No one would say a word against the honesty and integrity of Lord Milner. They were above suspicion. But there were only two parties in South Africa—the party of Lord Milner, backed by the capitalist Press, and the party whom Lord Milner had described as "blubbering pro-Boers." It was quite certain that Lord Milner could not dissociate himself from those persons with whom he had worked so long. Therefore Lord Milner must necessarily by force of circumstances be influenced by them. He had to work with those people and they were his close advisers. Therefore he could not dissociate himself from their policy. A very curious position had arisen in regard to this question in the Transvaal Legislative Council. Sir P. Fitzpatrick had strongly opposed the proposals of Lord Milner. He was not going to repeat what had been said in the Press in regard to his reasons for taking this course, and he would merely state what Sir P. Fitzpatrick said with regard to these proposals of Lord Milner. This was what Sir P. Fitzpatrick said:

> "Under the Gold Law it was specially provided that the Government should by no means proclaim any more land than was known to be mineralised. Thus the owners would have obtained under my pact not one-tenth of the farm, but one-tenth of the mine. The mine being less than 50 morgen in extent, they would have obtained one owner's claim of gold claim area, which was equal to 60 diamond claims. Hon. Members would see then that the Premier owners would have obtained one-tenth of the area of the mine, which would give them 400 claims, *plus* 60 owners' claims, making 460 diamond claims in all. Under the Diamond Law of 1898 they would obtain one selected eighth of the mine, *plus* 30 discoverer's claims, making in all 530 claims, while under the proposed new law it was suggested that they should get 1,600 claims. Now he could not see any possible justification for that."

Continuing, Sir P. Fitzpatrick said:

> "Taking the lowest figures, lower figures than had ever been put before them, it was proposed to give away millions of money which belonged to the State."

That was a statement coming from a gentleman whom the Government, at all events, relied upon for a written defence of their policy in South Africa. He went on to say:—

> "The strongest possible case had to be made out by them to justify them for paying away the proportion which belonged to the Government."

What did the Government say? They declared that they did not propose to throw this mine open to the public, because they did not wish to encourage any gambling in these claims. The only people who were likely to gamble in this respect were those very financiers. He dissented absolutely from the view that individual diggers would gamble with their property. Therefore, it was idle to put forward an excuse of that character. The only possible answer the Colonial Secretary could make to this question, was that there was a danger of gambling in public assets. He did not wish to deal with what occurred under the late Transvaal Government as to public pegging, but that was not the reason why the system was altered. The real reason why the system of public pegging was altered was owing to special advantages the capitalists were able to obtain. The Government decided that each person in the State should have an equal chance of pegging, and should be able to participate in the discoveries, but the Attorney-General under Lord Milner said that this would create gambling in public assets. Who were the men to whom they were going to give this immense wealth? They were men whose money had been made by gambling, and therefore it was idle to put forward this objection. Not satisfied, however, with this, the Government went still further, and introduced one of the most iniquitous laws which ever found its way on to the Statute-book of a British colony. They had introduced the Trapping Law of Cape Colony, which was passed through the influence of the De Beers Company. This law had been the source of great trouble in South Africa, and had been the subject of debates in the Legislative Council, and, notwithstanding that, Lord Milner had now introduced the very same Bill. He was not going to discuss this law in detail, but he would simply mention that under that Bill a Government detective was entitled to go to a man in the street whom he suspected of being engaged in diamond dealing; and he was entitled to go to that man, although he might be a perfect stranger, and offer him a stone to buy. If the man bought that stone from the Government detective he was liable to be sent to penal servitude for 15 years. To allow Government detectives to place temptations in the way of innocent men in this way was a scandal. Not only had this been done once, but it had occurred many times. He had many letters to prove this had happened quite a number of times, and many men had been trapped by this system of detectives; and yet, notwithstanding this abominable law, the Transvaal Legislative Council were putting it in force again. He would give the House one example. On the 30th of May, 1903, a report appeared in the *Diamond Fields Advertiser* of the trial of a Cape driver named Henry Daniels, who was discharged after having undergone a trial for an alleged contravention of Section 3 of the Diamond Trade Act. In passing sentence, the Judge said:—

> "Although they must convict the accused on this charge on the evidence, it was the sort of case he did not like. Prisoner was charged with being in the unlawful possession of two rough diamonds on a certain day, and a witness swears that he handed the diamonds to the accused for the purpose of sale—a witness who *primâ facie* there was no reason to discredit,

he being a guard in the employment of the De Beers Company, and whose duty if anyone approached him in regard to dealings in diamonds, was to report the matter to his superiors. As he had said he did not like this case. When they found the detective department through an agent putting diamonds in a man's hand, and then charging him with being in unlawful possession, it seemed rather like sharp practice."

That was the law of a British Colony passed through the Cape Assembly with the aid of the money of some of the De Beers directors, which had corrupted the whole public life of South Africa There was a speech delivered by Sir Gordon Sprigg with regard to the action of the De Beers party. He would not quote it, but he would advise the Colonial Secretary for his own information to study the speech made by Sir Gordon Sprigg in September, 1888. He was afraid he had rather inadequately, and not very clearly, explained to the House a question of immense importance in regard to diamond discoveries in South Africa, but he had done his best to place the matter as clearly before the House as he possibly could. He could go on bringing case after case against the adminis tration of Lord Milner, acts which he was sure this House would neither sanction or approve in their individual capacity.

It was almost incredible to believe, but it was an absolute fact, that Lord Milner and the Colonial Secretary had set up a new dynamite monopoly in South Africa. Before the war the Colonial Secretary took an active part in the agitation in this country against the late Transvaal Government on account of its dealings with the dynamite monopoly. The right hon. Gentleman then sent many cables to Lord Milner on this question, and between them they created an agitation both in South Africa and this country against the crying injustice the Transvaal Government were doing to the oppressed dynamite industry. The Colonial Secretary had now deliberately set up a new dynamite monopoly for the benefit of the De Beers Company. On January 13th, 1899, the Colonial Secretary made the following representation to Sir William Butler:—

"The question of the importation of explosives into the South African Republic has, as you are aware, been brought to my notice by British manufacturers, who complain that their manufactures are refused admittance into the Republic, and that they are thereby debarred from carrying on their commerce within the Republic conformably to Article XIV. of the London Convention.

"On receipt of these representations it became my duty to give the whole subject my full and careful consideration.

"His Majesty's Government are advised that the creation of a monopoly in favour of the State is not necessarily inconsistent with Article XIV. of the London Convention even when exercised by a concessionaire, provided that the concession is intended in good faith to benefit the State generally, and not simply to favour the concessionaire."

The De Beers Company soon after the outbreak of war commenced to erect an immense dynamite factory near Cape Town. Then there was a monopoly in dynamite, and they naturally considered that this monopoly would be removed. When the hon. Member for Warwick took out his Commission to South Africa a great deal of evidence was tendered as to the injustice caused to the Transvaal State by the creation of a monopoly in dynamite, and the Report upon this question states:—

"The company in our opinion should have no advantages in the competition for the manufacture of and trade in explosives in the Transvaal other than those which it has secured by the establishment there of its factories and its first occupation of the field of industry."

Then came Mr. Quinans, the manager of De Beers' dynamite factory, and he stated before this Commission that:

"In regard to the location of a factory, supposing that there are no determining political factors and the usual open-door policy of England is followed, the best situation is near the sea coast. The materials have to be imported and the railway freight on the raw material is saved."

Then came Mr. A. R. Goldring, Secretary of the Chamber of Mines; the De Beers directors control the majority of votes in this Chamber. He stated that the dynamite monopoly was prejudicial to the public interest and that it should be abolished. Sir P. Fitzpatrick stated that the dynamite company were "absolutely thieves at that time. The monopoly, whatever it is to-day, was a swindle." The Chairman asked, "In your judgment is this monopoly prejudicial to the public interest?" and his answer was "Certainly." In 1897, all these gentlemen connected directly or indirectly with the De Beers Company stated in evidence that free trade in dynamite was absolutely necessary. Now, what did they find? Within twelve months of the giving of that evidence, and after the hon. Member for

Leamington had reported in favour of free trade in dynamite, Mr. Goldring wrote to the Colonial Secretary asking for a new monopoly in dynamite. His letter, dated 11th July, 1902, contained the following:—

"In view of the statement made by His Excellency at the interview accorded to a deputation of my Chamber by the Government on June 16th last, 'that it was the desire of the Government to so arrange the rate of taxation (on explosives) that the dynamite company could live and make a reasonable profit, and no more,' it seemed to my Chamber that as there was a probability that this question might be dealt with at an early date, it would be of assistance to the Government to have before it the opinion of the mining industry on the subject. The Chamber has hitherto advocated the establishment of free trade in explosives in order that the industry should secure the benefit which would result from competition between rival manufacturers, and was prepared, if necessary, to ensure this by erecting a factory in Europe or by making permanent arrangements with existing factories. To secure free trade and competition, either of these courses is still open to the mining industry. Certain new facts in connection with this question have, however, to be borne in mind. First, the reduction in the price of explosives which has been already effected, and second, the establishment of a competing South African Factory. And accepting His Excellency's statement, above quoted, as a final declaration of Government policy on the subject, the various points which the Chamber had to consider were:—

"(1) That it is the intention of the Government to afford the local factory sufficient protection to enable it to carry on its business at a reasonable profit.

"(2) That, subject to this consideration, it is to the interest of the mines to obtain their explosives at the lowest possible prices.

"(3) That the local factory is armed and controlled by the huge monopoly known as the Nobel Trust.

"(4) That this being so, it is essential for the maintenance of reasonable prices that there shall be competition with the local factory.

"(5) That the establishment of the De Beers Explosives Company's factory in the Cape Colony affords an assurance of the necessary competition if the conditions are such that it is placed in a position to work at a reasonable profit.

"(6) That it is desirable that any protection which it may be decided to grant to the local factory should not operate so as to exclude South African competition, nor yet be such as to enable the local factory and the De Beers factory to effect a monopoly or by any other arrangement to unduly raise prices.

"To bring about the conditions which in the above considerations it is desirable to establish, the conclusion at which my Chamber have arrived is that an import duty of 5s. to 7s. 6d. per case, but not exceeding the latter, should be levied on explosives at the coast. The Chamber will further suggest that it is inadvisable at present that there should be any re-classification of the raw material used in the manufacture of explosives with reference to railway rates which would give the local factory a special advantage over the De Beers factory; for, although such a reclassification might result in a reduction in the price of explosives, there would be no guarantee that it would do so; and it might merely put the local factory in a position to completely oust the De Beers factory from the trade. And in making this suggestion the Chamber would further point out that the re-classification would reduce the railway returns, which are one important element of State revenue."

What was a reasonable profit in the eyes of the De Beers Company? Were governor's fees of £100,000 each? Was a profit of £2,500,000 per annum made by raising the price of diamonds five times above the cost of production, what they would consider a reasonable profit? This same Mr. Goldring who gave evidence in favour of abolishing the old dynamite monopoly and the establishment of a factory by the De Beers Company, suggested that an import duty of 5s. to 7s. 6d. per case, but not exceeding the latter, should be levied on explosives at the coast. The Colonial Secretary granted this protection of £14 per ton on all dynamite imported into the Transvaal. He had asked many questions on the subject, and had been met with the usual evasions. The right hon. gentleman had said—

"This matter is having my attention."

The British dynamite manufacturers, who had kindly provided him with the material for this case, sent a petition to the Colonial Secretary in June a year ago, in which they pointed out that this was a great injustice to them. They pointed out that they had contributed to the cost of the war and made great sacrifices, and that if this duty of £14 per ton was placed on dynamite they would be placed outside the market of South Africa. What justification had these men who led the bogus agitation against the Transvaal Government, and against the dynamite monopoly, for asking that a monopoly should be granted in favour of the De Beers Company? The Colonial Secretary had taken twelve months to consider the question already. What was the reason for putting a coast duty on? It was because the De Beers factory was there. There was no good reason to justify such a policy. Was this to be a sample of the new policy of the Colonial Secretary in the granting of these monopolies. Last night the right hon. Gentleman advocated a policy of broad Imperialism, but it would appear from what was taking place in South Africa the new Imperialism was to be of the "three acres and a cow" description. The monopoly could have no justification whatever, and it was not in the interest of South Africa. There were no ingredients in the Transvaal itself from which dynamite could be manufactured. The De Beers Company made a great mistake in putting their factory on the coast, and the Chamber of Mines had brought pressure on Lord Milner not to lower railway rates. Here were some of the men who advocated the lowering of rates in Mr. Kruger's time asking that they should be maintained in order to bolster up their monopoly. The people of this country were absolutely ignorant of all that was going on in South Africa. The only journals through which information came were controlled practically by the capitalists in South Africa. They also controlled the news agencies that supplied the public in this country—some of them, not all of them.

There was another equally monstrous thing, and that was the municipal franchise. The members of the Legislative Council were the nominees of Lord Milner directly or indirectly. In regard to the municipal franchise, he gave Lord Milner credit for the action he had taken. In the first municipal ordinance, he at all events showed his consistency, because it gave to the subjects of all Powers—French, German, Italian, and American—the right of exercising the municipal franchise. That was discussed in the Legislative Council, and all the official Members voted according to Lord Milner's instructions, with the result that the ordinance was carried by a majority of two. What happened? In view of the fact that all the capitalists had voted against the proposal, Lord Milner came down and said that the Government had reconsidered the question, and had decided to bring a new clause restricting the franchise to British subjects only. ["Hear, hear."] An hon. Member said "Hear, hear." Why should Americans be excluded? Lord Milner said that he wished every civilised man to have a vote and to administer his own property, but the Legislative Council said "No." Lord Milner then climbed down, and a new ordinance was brought in. Mr. Moneypenny said in the *Johannesburg Star*—

> "Further satisfaction would be felt if the franchise were limited to British subjects."

This gentleman formerly advocated the franchise for the Uitlander, but now he denies it him. We were regarded as hypocrites on this question. Everyone knew that we were not honest when we went to war on account of the franchise, dynamite, and other questions. Our conduct proved that, and degradation was the right name to describe the proceedings. The argument was that there was a law which over-ruled every other law — viz., that of self-preservation. What did the Attorney-General say?—

> "Without fear of contradiction, he declared that there was not a municipality in any part thereof—in Cape Colony, in Natal, in the Orange River Colony, in Rhodesia — which excluded aliens from the franchise."

Passing on to deal with coloured persons, the Attorney-General said that

> "If the case against the exclusion of aliens was a strong one, that against the exclusion of coloured British subjects who had reached a certain stage of civilisation, and who had the necessary qualifications, was still stronger. In other parts of South Africa, in Cape Colony, and Natal, the municipal franchise was given to every person who held the necessary property, no matter what his colour might be. The same system prevailed in Rhodesia. In the Orange River Colony before the war the municipal franchise was based upon property, a vote being given to every male person who, whether as owner or lessee, was in occupation of premises of a certain value."

He hoped the Secretary of State for India would allow no exportation of coolies to South Africa until a very different mode of dealing with Indian subjects had been introduced. Even the most civilised members of the British Empire, of which they were all proud, were excluded from administering their own property. The Attorney-General went on—

> "What they objected to was the shutting the door entirely, and saying to these men, 'No matter what your qualifications, no matter how highly educated you are, you shall not have the municipal franchise which is in no sense political.' Let them take the case of a British Indian who came from India to this colony. He might be a highly cultured man, he might even belong to the profession to which he (the Attorney-General) belonged—he could not give him more credit than that. In his own country he was entitled to all the privileges of a British subject, and there was no position there to which he could not aspire. . . ,

> He ventured to say that if they took up that position they were bound to be driven from it sooner or later, and bound to be driven from it with disgrace."

Would the right hon. Gentleman drive them from that position with disgrace? He ventured to say that the right hon. Gentleman would not.

In conclusion, the Attorney-General said that—

> "As far back as 1857 in Cape Colony, and 1858 in Natal, an alien was entitled to hold property on exactly the same terms as a British subject. It had not been so in other countries. And in regard to naturalisation, that was granted in Natal after two years, in Canada three years, in the Transvaal five years; and in the Orange River Colony it was five years because the Transvaal Naturalisation ordinance had been taken over by the Colony."

He did not wish to speak as an alarmist, but the information he had received from South Africa was that the condition of affairs was rapidly going from bad to worse. The people of this country had no knowledge of the state of the country. The British public were told just what the De Beers directors, who held the channels of information, chose to let them know. The Colonial Secretary was so much engaged in other matters that the question of South Africa was of minor importance to him. He had reason to believe that the fiscal policy the right hon. Gentleman had sprung upon the country was intended to hide up his miserable failure in South Africa. The right hon. Gentleman had played South Africa for all it was worth. His conviction was that we had now lost South Africa. [MINISTERIAL cries of "Nonsense," and "No."] Hon. Members said "No," but he was not exaggerating when he said the position in South Africa was graver to-day than it had been either before or during the war. Sooner or later it would be impossible to hide from the House and the people of this country the fact that there was a great revolution—not a revolution in arms, but a social revolution, taking place which would shake South Africa to its foundation, and therefore we ought to introduce a far-seeing policy into that country.

MR. LAWRENCE (Liverpool, Abercromby) said he was sure the Committee would thank him if he took them away to the cooler waters of Sierra Leone, and so check the ardour aroused by the hon. Gentleman opposite. He hoped he might be able to elicit a sympathetic response from the Colonial Secretary to a request that for some two years he had waited for. A rebellion in Sierra Leone occurred in the spring of 1898, and it would be in the cognizance of the Committee, that at that period there was a change in the fiscal system of the country—in his opinion, a very wise and proper one. The taxation put upon huts naturally created, in the first instance, an exhibition of feeling which took the form of nothing less than a rebellion. Long before this, certain merchants in Liverpool, people of the strictest honesty and of good position, who had for years engaged in important ventures in Africa, had started stores, and by their energy had helped to promote the civilisation of what were really at the time outlandish districts. When this exhibition of popular feeling arose their whole enterprise was in serious jeopardy. There were risings all round them, and their up-country stores were promptly destroyed by irritated natives. Happily they were able to send to headquarters and beg the assistance of one of His Majesty's gunboats to defend their property. They told the captain if he could only spare a modest squad of bluejackets they would be able to hold their own and keep the natives off. As a matter of fact, for many years this district had been subject to the amenities of a celebrated chief named Samory, and they were confident that with the friendly assistance and a mere handful of troops they would be able, as he had said, to hold their own. The captain of the gunboat said he could not spare any troops and he must take the merchants to Sierra Leone. This was disappointing to the merchants, because they had a considerable stock of goods lying close by, which they were told they would have to abandon. The captain said he could not leave the store buildings, as they might possibly become a stockade, and without more ado kerosene was thrown over the goods, and they were set on fire. He was aware that they had no legal claim or right to expect any compensation from the Government for any action of His Majesty's forces, but he hoped the Committee would show such sympathy as to enable the right hon. Gentleman to be a little more benevolent towards the claim put before him, a claim for some special consideration, Laws, even though based on public policy, should be subject to legitimate exceptions. A few years ago, there was a similar, though not quite such a strong case as he was now submitting; and he thought that the merchants for whom he was speaking, and who had lost their all in this matter, might fairly claim some special consideration. All they desired was that his right hon. friend should be a little kinder to them in respect of the property which was destroyed by His Majesty's gunboat. Only last week this House guaranteed a loan to compensate for the losses sustained in the great Boer war; and the Committee would allow that what was right and fair in South Africa was not wrong or unfair in Sierra Leone. It required a great deal of enterprise and patience to open up these inhospitable regions, where the climate was very trying and where the death rate was quite extraordinary, although it was now being reduced by the recent discoveries of Dr. Ross and others. He was quite certain that the Committee would sanction the action of his right hon. friend if he compensated these merchants, who had lost altogether a sum of £12,500. They did not ask that the whole of that sum should be recouped to them, but only such part of it as represented property destroyed by the gunboat; and they were prepared to submit the matter to any arbitrator or valuer appointed by the Colonial Office. He had been informed, although he could not give chapter and verse for the case, that when a factory was destroyed by His Majesty's ships in New Guinea, compensation was paid. If there was, as he had no doubt there was, a law which exempted public authorities from liability for acts taken in the public interest, there ought to be exceptions to it in certain cases such as the present.

SIR ROBERT REID (Dumfries Burghs) said he wished to say a few words on a particular point connected with the Transvaal. There was an ordinance published last year relating to the criminal law, which was of unusual strictness and severity. Among other things, it empowered a magistrate or police officer to arrest without a warrant any person who was reasonably suspected of any of a number of offences, including the use of language calculated to promote ill feeling and hostility between different classes. In case of arrest, no accusation need be preferred before any Court for twenty-one days, and, accordingly, there might be arbitrary imprisonment for that period at the discretion of a magistrate or police officer. Then again, the ordinance empowered officials in charge of post offices to intercept letters, which the resident magistrate might open if he had reasonable suspicion that they contained treasonable or seditious matter. There was also power to order any person to quit the colony who had not a permit, and to order any person who, in the opinion of the Governor, was dangerous, to quit the colony within fourteen days. There were various other provisions, one of which referred to the circulating of false intelligence calculated to create panic. The ordinance undoubtedly resembled the regulations which were enforced in a state of siege, when personal liberty was, of course, greatly restricted. Powers of this character were exceptional, and, however carefully administered, experience always showed them to be dangerous and liable to abuse —he did not mean abuse by reason of malevolence or tyrannical disposition, but abuse because of the essentially arbitrary character of restrictions which did not require any preliminary proof, and in which the person responsible acted on suspicion. Of course, it was impossible, while such regulations existed, that persons could be considered as in any sense secure from arbitrary arrest, and very often from unfounded arrest. In fact, common law was by means of this ordinance suspended, and instead of it there was a short, summary, and most unsatisfactory proceeding. He was under the impression that about two months ago a supplementary ordinance was passed increasing the penalties. At all events, the ordinance was now, a year and a half after the termination of the war, in existence. He wished to ask the Colonial Secretary how long it was contemplated to continue an ordinance which it would be admitted very seriously affected personal liberty. He thought it would be much to be deprecated if it were continued one day longer than was absolutely necessary. He should like to ask how many persons had been arrested under this ordinance, and kept in prison for a period not exceeding twenty-one days without being tried; to what extent letters had been opened; and how many persons had been deported.

The reason he asked these questions was that information was quite inaccessible with regard to a great deal that happened in South Africa. The greater part of the Press had at no time during the last three or four years been accurate with regard to South Africa. They had been silent very often, no doubt from the absence of information, and it was therefore all the more necessary that the Committee should be given information. He said that all the more because information, which he himself did not regard as absolutely reliable, had reached him to the effect that there had been a very considerable exercise of these powers. He was not prepared to accept that information; but undoubtedly there was a very uneasy feeling abroad that there had been a very considerable use of these powers. If that were so, it meant one of two things. It meant either that there had been an improper exercise of this arbitrary authority; or, what was even still more serious, that there was a state of discontent and serious social and political disturbance in South Africa, of which they would all deeply regret to hear. He would also wish, and it was a matter of great moment, that the right hon. Gentleman would tell the Committee what was the condition of the country. He would not ask if it was in a condition of loyalty, because a nation which had been fighting in the field could not be expected to immediately accept the position, and assume an attitude of loyalty towards this country. There was a time after the war was concluded when there was a great deal of friendly feeling displayed by the Boers who had fought against this country; and he himself heartily cherished the hope that that well-affected disposition towards this country might grow up. He would like to know now if the right hon. Gentleman could give the Committee any information as to that. If the ordinance to which he referred was necessary, it could only be necessary on very serious grounds. What were these grounds; and how long did the right hon. Gentleman anticipate they would last? Did he expect to be able to restore the ordinary common law at an early date in the Transvaal; and when, in the opinion of the right hon. Gentleman, would the state of society permit that? The right hon. Gentleman had said in respect to the native question that there would be no importation of coolies or Asiatics into the country unless the general sense of the population was expressed in a way favourable to it. If the general feeling of the population was to be considered on such a subject as that, then it ought also to be regarded in other matters, such as the government of the country itself. And as to how far that could be done was the question he desired to ask.

SIR BRAMPTON GURDON (Norfolk, N.) called attention to the recruiting of natives from Central and East Africa for work in the Johannesburg mines. These men were brought from a tropical climate and were quite unsuited to mining work, and their being unaccustomed to the climate, the food which was provided for them, and the work, resulted in a considerable amount of sickness and mortality. As he had before said it was no use ever to bring these men to Johannesburg to work in the mines unless the matter was perfectly explained to them, and he did not think it was possible to explain the conditions under which they would have to work to so ignorant a people. In the first, place they were recruited at a wage of 45s. a month, which was far less than the miners' wage, which was 60s. a month, and it was a great pity that they should be taken away from Central Africa just at the time when their services were required for railway construction. He could not conclude his remarks without calling attention to the excellent report of Mr. Munson. He was glad there was a British officer who was not afraid to place before the Government the difficulties of recruiting in Central Africa, and the danger that might be caused to men transferred from a tropical climate to other parts of South Africa. He begged to move the reduction of the Vote by £100.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £26,400, be granted for the said Service."—(*Sir Brampton Gurdon.*)

MR. CAWLEY (Lancashire, Prestwich) called attention to the dismissal of a large portion of the South African Constabulary. He pointed out that at the end of 1891 a great many men were enlisted in this country for this force, that they went to South Africa and fought for their country as long as the war lasted, and they naturally hoped that some of the inducements which had been held out to them would be realised. Seventy-five per cent. of them however had been discharged, and all the compensation they had received had been their passage money to Cape Town, and even that had been very meagre; and in many cases when they arrived at Cape Town they had no money to go on with. He had brought the matter before the Colonial Secretary as to whether a breach of agreement had not been committed by the authorities, and whether compensation could not be given. In the negative reply that he had received from the Colonial Secretary the right hon. Gentleman had evidently relied on Clause 11 of the Memorandum of Enlistment. The first part of the agreement treated of the formation of the force, the second with the qualifications, and the third, and this was rather important, stated that the term of enlistment was three years. It seemed to him quite plain from that clause that under the terms of the Memorandum of Enlistment these men had enlisted for three years. No suggestion was made in that that they could be dismissed. Paragraph 2 said that a non-commissioned officer or man could be discharged at any time by order of the officer commanding the division, with or without a gratuity, and if that was the paragraph the right hon. Gentleman relied on it was not quite fair, because the paragraph obviously applied to the dismissal of a man for a dereliction of duty or for some particular cause, and not to the dismissal of a considerable portion of the force. No recruit, looking at the conditions, would have supposed for a moment that, after serving in South Africa for some time, 75 per cent. of the force would be dismissed without compensation. They ought at least to have their passage paid home. That was done in the case of the men found medically unfit. The conditions of service were supposed to offer a career to enterprising young men, and a first-class force was brought together. They were promised employment for at least three years, a chance of settlement, promotion, and higher pay; now, through no fault of their own, they were sent away with only their fare to Cape Town paid, and they would come home penniless, although many of them in order to go to South Africa had given up careers which it would be very difficult to resume. Unless something was done for these men he considered it would be a disgrace to the country.

MR. FULLER (Wiltshire, Westbury) said that a short time ago, by an unstarred Question, he asked the Colonial Secretary if he would make a statement with regard to the practically unanimous request of the inhabitants of the island of Tristan da Cunha to be deported to South Africa. The island contained a population of 32 children and 44 adults; it had no Government, no clergyman, no schoolmaster, no disease, and no crime; its only drawback was that it was infested with rats. He suggested that the right hon. Gentleman might well give the matter his serious consideration; the expense would be infinitesimal, and the population of the new colonies would be increased.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar) said the able speech of the right hon. Member for the Mansfield Division with regard to the diamond concession—unless there was some complete answer to it—went to show that the public interest in these mining rights had not been properly safeguarded, and that certain persons had been greatly advantaged at the expense of the general public. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would be able to put a different complexion on the matter; otherwise the confidence of the country in the management of the affairs of these Crown colonies would be considerably diminished. With regard to the important point raised by his hon. friend in regard to the still existing deportation ordinance, he asked whether the right hon. Gentleman did not think the time had come when some relaxation might be made. All were anxious that at the earliest possible moment the feeling which naturally existed at the close of a war should be allayed, but the existence of this ordinance was a source of irritation to a large body of people, and if it could be amended or dispensed with a step would have been taken in the right direction. He further asked whether the right hon. Gentleman could give any information—a Return would perhaps be the best form in which to give it—as to the manner in which the money already voted for compensation and repatriation had been expended. There appeared to be considerable uneasiness as to whether the money promised had been expended, and, if expended, whether it had been spent in the proper direction. He wished it to be distinctly understood that he made no insinuation of any kind; he did not suggest that the money had not been properly expended; but it would be very satisfactory, both here and in South Africa, if the right hon. Gentleman would give some information in regard to the matter, especially as to who had been responsible for the carrying out of the repatriation, the direction and extent of the assistance in stocks, farms, and rebuilding of houses, and the general lines on which repatriation had been carried out.

The recent speech of the Colonial Secretary, confirmed as it was by the despatch of May 23rd to Lord Milner, regarding the conditions under which Asiatic labour might be introduced into these colonies, had given great satisfaction. In the despatch the right hon. Gentleman, referring especially to the labour question, stated—

> "In adopting any important line of policy in the new colonies, His Majesty's Government would need to satisfy themselves that the essential features were acceptable to the general opinion of the white population. The new colonies must be regarded as destined, at some day not far distant, to enter upon the privileges of self-government, and in anticipation of the event no such serious step should be taken as would be likely to be reversed by any autonomous legislature."

He was glad the Colonial Secretary had expressed his views on the matter so clearly, as the pressure put upon the right hon. Gentleman by Lord Milner and others—according to the despatch—had been very great indeed. Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman would say whether he had any anticipations as to further steps being taken in the direction of self-government. The difficulty was that until representative institutions were given to these Crown colonies it would be practically impossible to discover what the real public opinion was, as the decisions of the Legislative Council would not necessarily represent the views of the people at all. The right hon. Gentleman had had strong pressure put upon him by Lord Milner. Lord Milner used the very greatest possible pressure to induce the Colonial Secretary to agree to the immediate importation of Asiatic labour, and he said that they might be landed into financial embarrassment if Asiatic labour was not imported. That was the view of the present Governor of the Transvaal, who declared that unless he was enabled to go to India for additional labour the Transvaal would soon be landed in financial embarrassment. The Colonial Secretary had declined to give Lord Milner power to go to India for native labour, and his refusal was dependent upon the state of public opinion in the Transvaal, which was hostile to Asiatic labour. He thought it would be some time before that opinion altered, even if it altered at all. That opinion, however, was totally different to what they heard the other day in the debate upon the South African Loan. Lord Milner took a very rosy view of the financial position of the Transvaal, and estimates had been given them which seemed almost incredible. It had been stated that the revenue would be sufficient in a year or two to cover, not only the ordinary expenditure, but also the interest which would have to be paid upon the £35,000,000 loan and the £30,000,000 loan. That did not seem consistent with the statement that if Asiatic labour was not imported the country would be landed in financial embarrassment. He should like from the right hon. Gentleman some explanation of the present financial position of the Transvaal.

*MR. BOLAND (Kerry, S.) said that, in view of the fact that one of the British colonies had recently had its constitution suspended, he did not think the House of Commons could do better than discuss for a short time the reason for that suspension. He wished to make his position clear with regard to the teaching of the English and Italian languages in Malta. His whole contention about the language question was as to whether the Italian or the English language was to have the uppermost position in Malta. In spite of the withdrawal of the proclamation by the Colonial Secretary on the 28th of January, 1902, the elected members of the Council of Malta resigned in a body on the 15th of February. Although they resigned, they were re-elected a short time afterwards absolutely unanimously. No opposition was offered to their re-election, and for years they had been elected on the understanding that they would continue to press forward the Italian language as against the English. The Colonial Secretary claimed that they did not represent the wishes of the people, but nevertheless he had always refused to extend the franchise. If it were true that the elected members did not represent anyone except a small fraction of the people, why not extend the franchise ? He had always felt that one of the great difficulties in Malta arose from the position which Sir G. Strickland occupied, and when he was transferred to another post he thought that difficulty would have disappeared. That, however, had not been the case, and the state of affairs had been just as bitter as before. He agreed that the right hon. Gentleman had made some substantial concessions with regard to the position of the Italian language. Those concessions had been made since last year, and he only pointed to them as a reason and justification for the determined attitude of the people of Malta in bringing this question to the front. The contention of the right hon. Gentleman had always been that the substitution of English for Italian was desired by the people of Malta themselves ; that nothing in the way of coercion had been used ; and that they had accepted it of their own free choice, but this contention was not borne out by the Report of Mr. Magro, one of the inspectors of schools in Malta. Directions were given, on page 29 of the recent Blue-book, that very important matters mentioned in the Report should be taught, but the language was to be English, and no mention was made that at least an equal opportunity should be given to have Italian taught at the same time.

Reference had been made to the figures in the Official Returns for the year 1902. In the first and second standards it was found that the percentage was 81·4 English and 18·6 Italian. In the case of secondary instruction in the third standard the per centage for English was 85·4, and Italian 14·6. These figures showed that the overwhelming voice of the parents in Malta was in favour of the English language, but he did not think the Committee could accept them as absolutely final. This inquiry was instituted by direction of the right hon. Gentleman, and certainly throughout there had been an effort on the part of people in Malta to have the figures come up to the desire expressed by him. The Legislative Council applied to be represented on the inquiry, with the view of having the witnesses tested, and they suggested that the witnesses should be examined on oath. That permission was refused, and the whole inquiry had been conducted by Government officials only. The Colonial Secretary himself demanded that there was to be a free choice in Malta between English and Italian. There were many cases still, and certainly one important instance, in which a free choice did not really exist. If they were to have a free choice given to the parents and their children, there must be equal facilities for both languages right through the education ladder. He took it that the Lyceum in Malta was a secondary school. Seven of the Professors there were Italian, and eleven were English. He had seen it stated, and believed it was correct, that only two subjects in the course at the Lyceum—Italian and Latin—were transacted in Italian. In all the other subjects, including mathematics, physics, and, of course, English history and English literature, English was the language in which the instruction was given. That was not giving the people a free choice. If English was the language of instruction in the majority of the subjects at the Lyceum, that was putting a premium on English. It was telling the people practically that in the lower standards English should also be the language taught to their children. It would probably be said by the Colonial Secretary that the Italian-speaking population in Malta was very small comparatively speaking, and he would probably include in English-speaking communities British subjects connected with the fleet and garrison, and also the English officials. That was not a fair test. The Maltese-born British subjects who spoke English numbered 18,922 according to last Census, while the Italian - speaking population numbered 21,027. It was only by adding in the number of those connected with the fleet and the garrison and English officials that the right hon. Gentleman would be able to show that there was a greater number of English than Italian speakers in Malta. The right hon. Gentleman might say that Italian was not the language of Malta. It was, however, the language of culture and of literature, and he held that the removal of it, or supercession of it, would be detrimental to the interests of Malta. What was being done was an attempt to Anglicise the people, which he believed would never succeed. It had always been the contention of the Colonial Secretary that this agitation in Malta was of a purely temporary character, and that the people against the English language were only a small clique, the representatives of which saw reason for keeping it out. If it was only a temporary agitation, what necessity was there for suspending the constitution? If the English language was gaining ground, and the Maltese people wanted it, why not leave the old constitution as it stood?

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN, Birmingham, W.): It was unworkable.

*MR. BOLAND asked if the right hon. Gentleman meant that it was unworkable because of the attitude of the elected members on the language question or on other questions? He might at least have given it a few years' trial. It was not fair or statesmanlike to say that the constitution must be suspended because there was a temporary agitation going on which had not the people behind it. He was convinced that although the Maltese people might be beaten and the constitution abolished, their strength was so great that they would go on with this agitation for the revival of the Italian language, and in this they would have the sympathy not merely of the Italian people, but also of everyone, even in this country, who desires to see a small people retain its own nationality, and who would regret to see a small people have forced upon them in any way, anything which would tend to remove that special quality of nationality which frequently found expression in the national language. By the national language he meant that it was the literary and cultured language of the country.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE (Carnarvon Burghs) said he wanted information on a matter with regard to which he put, last Thursday, a Question to the Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs—namely, the Canadian Papers on the dispute between Canada and Germany on the tariff matter. He understood that the right hon. Gentleman was prepared to submit the Papers to the House. The Papers which had been submitted to the House by the Foreign Office related solely to the correspondence between the Foreign Office and Germany, and he could understand that this was outside the Colonial Secretary's Department. But the Papers which he thought ought to be submitted to the House, and on which the right hon. Gentleman alone could give imformation, were letters written to his Department by Lord Strathcona. There was one letter of which he had obtained a copy in the official *Hansard* of the Canadian Parliament.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN said that he should, of course, be most happy to communicate to this House anything already communicated to the Canadian Parliament. If it had been published in Canada there could be no difficulty in communicating it to the House here.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE said he thought the best plan would be to state what, according to the report of the Canadian Parliament, was said in the speech of the Minister of Finance. The first letter read by the Minister of Finance, dated 11th July, 1898, was from Lord Strathcona to the Under Secretary of State for the Colonies. The other document which he thought ought to be in the possession of the House was one submitted by the Canadian Minister of Finance to the German Consul of Montreal, Herr Bopp. This was also placed before the Canadian Parliament. It was a Memorandum stating the whole case of Canada in the controversy, and he must say that it seemed to him to place a totally different aspect on the case from the one communicated to the House of Commons. He did not understand that the right hon. Gentleman would object to that Paper being communicated to the House. The only other point he should like to put to the right hon. Gentleman was this. He thought it would be for the convenience of hon. Members to have these Papers before the House separated, and he believed that would be possible if the right hon. Gentleman would communicate with Canada on the subject by cable. The House would not separate until the 14th or 15th of August and there would be plenty of time to get the documents from Toronto or Montreal if they were not already here. He would like to suggest also that as colonial matters were coming very much to the front in regard to fiscal affairs, it was important that their information regarding the colonies should be more complete than it was at the present moment. He submitted that it was really of first class importance that they should have in the library copies of the *Hansard* of the self-governing colonies, and all the Colonial Blue-books on questions bearing on the trade and industries of those countries. If they had had copies of the *Debates* in the Canadian Parliament they would have had all the speeches of the Minister of Finance and the Leader of the Opposition, which presented the whole of the Canadian case in its relation to Germany. He did not think it would be unfair to ask the Colonial Secretary to include among the Papers he was going to present to Parliament on the tariff question some of these Canadian Papers He had in his hand a Paper which showed that the Leaders in Canada were quite disinclined to enter into the question of international free trade, and he would read a very brief extract from it. The Canadian Minister said—

> "As between British and Canadian manufactures, we thought we had gone as far in the way of reduction as we could."

And then the Minister went on—

> "What we have got to do is, first, to protect our own industries."

He asked the Colonial Secretary to present the House with all the documents showing what had transpired between Germany and Canada.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: As the discussion is so very miscellaneous, perhaps I had better deal with it so far as it has gone, lest any of the points should be missed. In reply to the hon. Gentleman the Member for Carnarvon, I have no possible objection to give any information in my power which bears on this great subject. Any Papers which have been published or laid by the Canadian Parliament I shall certainly be happy to obtain and lay upon the Table of the House, or place in the library, according to their importance. I am under the impression that I have already telegraphed for these Papers; but I cannot say whether they will be laid before the House rises. There is no record of these Papers in the Colonial Office at present. As regards the *Debates*, there is no precedent for publishing as Parliamentary Papers speeches delivered in the Dominion Parliament; but, of course, it is open to everybody to consult the Canadian *Hansard* which is in the library of the House. The hon. Gentleman was, I think, a little hazardous in quoting the opinions of Members of the Dominion House. That makes it absolutely necessary for me to say that the question whether the Canadian Government will or will not be willing to give further reductions upon those goods which are or may be manufactured in Canada—in other words, whether they will give us a nearer approach to free trade as far as Canadian manufacturers are concerned —is not concluded by anything which has been said up to the present time. I imagine that the answer will depend on the offer we can make to Canada. This, at all events, I can say—that when we were discussing the matter with the Prime Ministers we had many conversations, not carried on in the Conference, but carried on between the Board of Trade, as representing British trade, and the Minister representing Canadian trade, to see whether it might not be possible so to rearrange Canadian tariffs without ruining—which was the word used—Canadian industries, and yet give considerable advantages to British industries. But, no doubt, all that will be definitely decided when we are in the position to make anything in the nature of a definite offer.

The hon. Gentleman the Member for Wiltshire asked about Tristan da Cunha. There is a small population there, upon whom, like other small populations under similar circumstances, their lonesome lives and the fact that they are shut out from the rest of the world has had an injurious effect. It might be desirable to deport the population to South Africa; but the question is one which cannot be answered without communication with the Government of South Africa, and until we have had such communication I cannot give a definite reply. The hon. Member for Devonport raised a question about the treatment of certain members of the South African Constabulary, but, without notice of the particular cases in writing for the purposes of inquiry, I am unable to give any answer. Since the close of the war the force has been reduced from 10,000 to 6,000, but the reduction has been made carefully and cautiously, generally by the voluntary resignation of those who desired to follow other occupations, and where it was by dismissal there was reason to complain of the conduct of the person dismissed. So far as I know, there has been no case of harsh dismissal such as the hon. Gentleman suggests, but if he will give me the particulars in writing I shall inquire into it. The hon. Baronet the Member for Norfolk referred to the importation to South Africa of natives from British Central Africa, which he regarded as a failure. I do not know whether the facts are correct, but I have asked for information. I will only say that the most successful of our emigrations to the West Indies was in its inception attended by somewhat similar circumstances. The wants of the natives were not then so well understood as they are now, and consequently in the first instance there was a considerable amount of sickness. Therefore the fact of such sickness among the natives of British Central Africa who have gone to the Transvaal would not be a conclusive reason against continuing the experiment. Assuming the facts to be as stated by the hon. Baronet, they are not at all satisfactory. On the other hand, I refuse to pay the slightest attention to such statements as the hon. Baronet read from gentlemen in Central Africa, whose one object it is to keep the natives there, *adscripti glebae*, attached to the soil, in order that they may have a sufficiency of labour at an exceptionally low cost. We have it from the able Administrator of the Protectorate, on whose good faith I have the fullest reliance, that there is a great amount of surplus labour, and that, apart altogether from the question of South Africa, it would be of advantage to the Protectorate to try its hands at South African work.

Then the hon. and learned Member for Dumfries Burghs asked me some questions as to the Peace Preservation Act. There also I think the hon. and learned Gentleman will see that it is impossible for me to state the actual results and extent to which the Act has been put in operation. I believe it is not the case that a further ordinance has been issued imposing severer penalties. On the contrary, when I myself was in South Africa I arranged some alterations and some modifications of its provisions. My own impression is that up to the present time it has been very little used. The hon. and learned gentleman put the question somewhat in the shape of a dilemma. He said: "If the condition of the country is not satisfactory, a great, deal of what you told us before has proved to be incorrect; if, on the contrary, it is satisfactory, what do you want with the Peace Preservation Act?"

SIR ROBERT REID: I said that if the statements which reached me as to the extensive use of the ordinance be true, then it meant one of two things—either there has been maladministration or there is a serious state of things which requires the use of the ordinance.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: My answer to the question would be that it would be unwise, in my opinion, to dispense with legislation of this kind. We must have the powers, even though we may not require to put them into operation. And here let me say that one of the great difficulties we have to deal with in the Transvaal and the Orange River Colony does not concern the relations between the Boers and the British. Not at all. They concern the relations between different sections of the Boers themselves. There was at one time a very bitter feeling between those who surrendered in the early stages of the war and those who stood out to the end. That is a state of things most unfortunate, most disastrous, and not at all tending to the general peace, order, and prosperity of the country; and that was one of the things I did my best to address myself to when I was in South Africa, imploring both sides to forget the past and not to bear any unkind memories or malice in the way they were doing. The feeling had proceeded so far that some of the Dutch Reformed Church predikants refused to baptize the children of Boers who surrendered early in the war and refused to give them the Holy Communion.

MR. HAVILAND BURKE (King's County, Tullamore): Those were the National Scouts.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: Almost the whole of the National Scouts were persons who surrendered early in the war.

MR. HAVILAND BURKE: And afterwards drew the rifle on their own flesh and blood.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: It is not my object to raise controversial matters. I am not here to say whether the action of the National Scouts was right or wrong, but it does not lie in the mouth of any Britisher to condemn them. What I say is this, that the war being over, and these people being neighbours and of the same race and blood, and being very numerous on both sides, it is in the interests of the country that they should be brought together, and when I found, as I did, that there were some mischief-makers who were trying to maintain the unhappy relations I have indicated between different classes of Boers, I felt it my duty to bring all the pressure I possibly could to bear in order that that state of things might cease. To a very large extent I am glad to say that state of things has ceased. I have heard many satisfactory accounts of the results of what has been done. I might quote as one instance the fact that the Boers are forming agricultural associations in different parts of the country to look after their interests as an agricultural community. An agricultural association has been formed in the neighbourhood of Pretoria. Speaking from memory, I believe I am correct in saying that the chairman of that association is Andreas Cronje, brother of Piet Cronje, who surrendered at Paardeberg. He was himself the head of the National Scouts, having first fought bravely for the cause of the Boers, but when the country fell into our hands, he thought it his duty to transfer his allegiance, and thereupon became a National Scout. Mr. Andreas Cronje was the chairman of this association, and the vice-chairman is a gentleman who fought to the end and surrendered with General Botha. In the same way, the other officers of the association are divided between the two sections of the Boers. That is very satisfactory, and I congratulate the Committee and the Government on the fact that they have been in many cases brought together. But this is one of the reasons why it was necessary, and I believe is still necessary, to have strong powers; because if we found our work of pacification being undone, if we found mischief-makers trying to separate those whom we had brought together, we would not hesitate to use our powers and enforce them. The hon. Member for Poplar referred to General Botha. I attach not the slightest importance to the letter from General Botha. I think it will tend very much to lessen his influence with the majority of his countrymen. He has definitely taken the lead of those who are irreconcilable. As I say, I do not attach the slightest importance to the letter, which was evidently written to order, and as to which I very much doubt whether it was written by General Botha himself. [AN HON. MEMBER: Whose order?] I am quite satisfied with the expression of my own opinion on the subject. I hold an optimistic view. I think the only passage in that letter which is of real importance is that in which he points out the extraordinary way in which the people are setting to work in order to restore the country and improve its condition: and I am satisfied as long as they are so employed, it will not be necessary to go behind that evidence.

The hon. Member for Poplar, while expressing approval of what has been stated by me with regard to the importation of coolie labour for work on the railways, pointed to language in the letter of Lord Milner to the effect that if the labour question grows worse it may cause serious financial embarrassment in the Transvaal. That is a commonplace almost. If efficient labour cannot be obtained, if the mines have to be closed, there will be, temporarily at any rate, very great financial embarrassment in the Transvaal. Nobody, however, supposes that the matter will not ultimately be settled, and my policy is to leave them to work out their own salvation. The hon. Gentleman asks me how we propose to ascertain public opinion in the absence of representative government. In the first place I deny absolutely that there is no representative government. Some Members of the House seem to suppose that the only possible representative government is a constitutional government with all the fullest forms of the British Constitution. That is not the case. That may be the final development, but in the meantime Legislative Councils, such as those which have been established in the Orange River Colony and in Pretoria, are representative, and do give indications of public opinion to which it would be monstrous not to pay some attention. It is quite true that they are nominated councils. Somebody said that they are the creatures of the Government. If by that is meant anything more than that they are nominated by the Government, it would be very unjust both to them and to the Government. What is really the fact? There are Lord Milner, Sir A. Lawley, and Sir A. Goold Adams, with a tremendous work upon their shoulders. Their object is to get their business done with the least possible irritation and the most general goodwill. What folly it would be of them if they only called advisers who would be their creatures, who would not give them advice which would be of sound value. I say of my own knowledge—for I discussed this matter with them most carefully—that the Governors took every possible pains to secure as representative a council as they could get. It would have been in the case of the Pretoria Council a little more representative if there were a larger representation of what are called the irreconcilable Boers. But whose fault is it there is not that representation? We took the three men who at that time were the recognised leaders, and had obtained influence by their bravery and conduct during the war. We asked all of them to serve. They refused. It is not our fault that gentlemen who would have represented that section insisted on standing outside. All the other sections have come in. The moderate Boers, the "hands-uppers," as they are called. All the other sections are represented, and represented by men of the greatest popularity and influence in their several districts. In the same way, every class of the community is represented.

Now, when a question is put to a council so appointed, no doubt you must weigh the votes as well as number them. We have a Government majority, and if an Imperial interest is concerned we can order the Government members to vote one way, and the whole nominated members can vote the other. But surely if we were anxious to get the public opinion of the country we should in such a case pay a great deal of attention to the votes of those who are the nominated and representative members. If we found, for example, that the representatives of labour were opposed to us, I should say that was an important factor in the matter. Even though what the hon. Member for Mansfield calls the capitalist class voted one way, I should pay great attention to the fact that the working-class representatives voted the other. Therefore we can get a certain amount of indication of public opinion from a council so constituted. Then we have the Press, which, notwithstanding what has been said by the hon. Member for Mansfield, is really a free Press. The statement which the hon. Member has made has been denied again and again. We know what are the kind of statements he sometimes makes in this House, and what is the evidence on which he relies for their truth. All I can say is I know nothing about it. I am not behind these papers. All I know is that it has been absolutely denied that there has been any such influence. But if there is in one case, or more than one, there are some papers of which it cannot be true, because they live by abusing the capitalists, and I do not suppose that they are paid by the capitalists for that. Then, the other day, a great public meeting was held, and was addressed by one of the most popular, and deservedly popular, capitalists in the Transvaal, a gentleman who has done a great deal for the public life of the Transvaal, and to whom that country owes a great debt—Sir George Farrar. Sir George Farrar fought in the war with conspicuous bravery. Millionaire though he was, he did not hesitate to risk his life like anybody else. He called this meeting together and addressed them strongly in favour of Asiatic labour. What was the result? I forget whether an amendment was moved, but, at all events, the meeting with absolute unanimity voted against their popular chairman. I am quoting that as a proof that public opinion is free in the Transvaal, and there is not the least doubt that we shall have very accurate information from time to time of what the opinion of the country may be upon this question. I have said to the House that at the present time we have sufficient knowledge to justify us in saying that public opinion in the Transvaal is against this importation of this Asiatic labour. It may be that at some future day a different view may be taken. Then the hon. Member for Poplar also asked for a Return of the expenditure upon repatriation and compensation, showing the lines upon which it has been carried through. As to the lines on which it has been carried through, I really think we have given him the information in the Blue-books which have been published. As regards the actual balance-sheet, I shall be very pleased to lay Papers upon that subject as soon as I can get anything that is at all complete. Meanwhile, I will inquire as to what can be done in that respect.

Then, Sir, there is the long speech of the hon. Member for Mansfield, in which he brought various charges against the Government, and against Lord Milner, and, of course, against the capitalist class. The hon. Member appears to think that the capitalist class is represented by De Beers, and it is against De Beers that he has brought two out of the three matters which he has brought before the Committee to-day. The first question is as to the course which has been taken with regard to a certain diamond mine which the hon. Gentleman says is one of extraordinary value. He complains that I have not answered a Question which he put upon the Paper. Sir, the Question which he put upon the Paper was rather singularly worded. It was,

> "To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he has received from Lord Milner, Sir A. Lawley, or any other Transvaal official, any despatch, report, letter, or any communication whatever in connection with the new diamond law."

No cross-examining counsel could put a more searching inquiry than that, and it seems to imply a suspicion that something very nefarious will take place unless every possible hole and corner is stopped. I refused in the interests of all Secretaries of State to answer a question of that kind, because one of our most valuable privileges is the power which we have to write privately and to receive private letters from the Governors and Ambassadors, from Ministers and from persons in authority representing us in foreign countries. If it were known that we were to be cross-examined with regard to documents of that kind nothing in the nature of that private and confidential intercourse could go on; and it would be a very serious precedent if I were to consent to reply to any Question which would touch upon that privilege. If instead of being so very careful to ask everything, the hon. Member had been satisfied to inquire of me whether I had received any official despatch or report, or anything of that kind, I should not have had the slightest hesitation in saying practically I have not received any. I have received one telegram, in which Lord Milner states that the matter is too complicated to be dealt with by telegram, and accordingly I told the hon. Gentleman that I had communicated with Lord Milner, asking for information for myself as well as for others, and that I was waiting for his report. I am still waiting for his report, and I am unable therefore to make any statement to the Committee as to the ultimate decision of the Government. But I know enough to be able to say that the statement that has been made by the hon. Gentleman is not accurate. The statement or implication of the hon. gentleman is that in order to benefit De Beers Lord Milner, whose integrity he does not impugn, is deliberately altering the law in regard to diamond mining in favour of De Beers and against the State.

Mr. MARKHAM: I did not say that.

Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN: That is the charge. That is the implication from everything the hon. Member said. Any Member who was in the House at the time will know that what I say is perfectly correct. To say you do not impeach the integrity of a man, and in almost the same breath to say that you accuse him of having injured the State pecuniarily for the benefit of a monopoly, is a very inconsistent line of argument. What are the facts? Under the Transvaal law the State got nothing, the Crown got no portion of the mine, but only a share of the licence money, which is a very small business. We have discussed this question of mining laws, and I found myself absolutely and entirely in agreement, so far as the principle was concerned, with Lord Milner. The details, of course, I assume he will carry out from time to time. Our object with regard to all new discoveries is to get every penny we can for the State, having regard to the interests of the State in the further development of the industry. If we did not treat the pioneer, the discoverer, the mine-owner, reasonably, we should get nothing done. There is present a Member of this House who used continually to tell us that the Treasury had destroyed all chance of the development of the mining industry in Wales by insisting upon excessive royalties. If so, it was excessively foolish and unbusinesslike of the Treasury. The object of every Government representative should be to increase the development of enterprise, and be content with a fair and reasonable share. We claim the whole of the mine except such part of it as is to go to the owner of the land and the discoverer. The proposal in this case is to give the owner, I think it is four-tenths of the mine as his own. The Transvaal gave to the owner one-eighth of the mine and thirty claims to the discoverer. One point of which the hon. Member seems to be ignorant is this—that under the old law a person so benefited had the right of selection. If you have the selection of a portion of a mine it is quite possible you may take the eye, and all the rest will be of no value at all, and it seems to me that to allow the discoverer or the owner to select even a small portion of a mine, if you give him the first choice, may be to destroy every advantage which the Government hopes to obtain from the discovery. Accordingly, in the present instance we treat the mine as an undivided whole, and we take six-tenths of the profits, whatever they are. I do not know the details of this legislation. As I understand, it is agreed by every expert, and I attach more value to the opinion of experts in this matter than to any other, that you cannot work a diamond mine satisfactorily, or economically, except as a whole. And, therefore, the mine is to be worked as a whole and we have six-tenths of the profit. The hon. Gentleman talked at great length about the extraordinary fact that, after protesting last night against a monopoly in sugar, I should now establish a monopoly in diamonds. But diamonds are not the food of the people, and for my part I do not care a brass button whether diamonds are dear or whether they are cheap. I quite understand that it is a matter of State profit. That is the only way in which I am interested or concerned in the matter. I quite understand that it would be killing the goose that lays the golden eggs if you took all the diamonds at once. It may be a far wiser course to keep a considerable number of diamonds in hand as a resource for future generations. If we applied such a system to what are called "black diamonds," it might be a good thing for this country. We are considering the best way of dealing with the mine in order to obtain the largest return for the State, and the hon. Member says we are creating a monopoly that will be an evil to the State. That seems to me to be a perfect exaggeration.

The hon. Gentleman's second point was the monopoly of dynamite. There, again he had the nightmare of De Beers about him. So far as I could make out, he confused De Beers with what is called the local factory. At all events, so far as I could gather, he was reading something about the protection of local industries and seemed to believe that it was De Beers. If so, he is entirely mistaken. The question of our protecting local industries concerns only the original factory at Bloemfontein, a factory which was established by Germans under the Transvaal rule. Against that factory he says, and says truly, we protested, but not for the reason that he suggests. We said we had no power or right to interfere in this matter if it was a monopoly working for the benefit of the State, because in that case the State would be able to draw its share of the revenue from the industry. What we complained of was that, contrary to the Convention, which provided equal commercial rights for all people, it was a monopoly which did nothing whatever for the State, and was conducted solely in the interests of a particular individual or a particular firm. When we came, I need scarcely say that our first object was to put an end to this grotesque monopoly. We found that we could not do entirely without dynamite as a source of revenue, and accordingly the 7s. 6d. a keg was put on as a revenue duty upon all dynamite imported into the Transvaal. That is the chief thing of which the British manufacturers for whom the hon. Member speaks—that is, Kynoch's and Nobel's — most bitterly complain. I have strongly represented to the Legislative Council that if they are going to put on, as they must put on, a revenue duty of 7s. 6d., then they ought to put on an internal Excise duty of equal amount. If that is done the local manufacturer will have no advantage whatever over the British importer, except the advantage of propinquity. But the matter is not settled. Like everything else of this kind the matter has been referred to the Legislative Council, and I shall give due consideration to anything which that Council, who will have, I believe, in this matter the real interests of the country at heart, may decide upon. Then there is the case of another manufactory, which is the De Beers manufactory, but which is situated in Cape Colony. It is not subject, therefore, to the coastal duty, because it is in South Africa, and the duty for all South Africa is collected at the coast. Neither is it subject at the moment to a Transvaal duty, because the Customs Convention has, as far as possible, done away with all inter-colonial Customs and has made free trade within South Africa. But, having regard to this peculiar and exceptional case, what is suggested is that a special duty of 7s. 6d. per case shall be put on the De Beers dynamite, and if that is done everybody will be on exactly the same terms. That is the proposal which has been submitted to the Legislative Council at Pretoria, and at present I am waiting for their consideration of it. That is the second great scandal.

Now I come to the third—the municipal franchise. The hon. Member is shocked at our inconsistency because, forsooth, we asked for the franchise for the Uitlanders while, he says, we refuse the municipal franchise to the Uitlanders ourselves. We do nothing of the kind. We do not refuse the municipal franchise to the Uitlanders; we do not refuse naturalisation. Our difficulty in the time of the late Republic was that British subjects could not get naturalised. We never claimed for them that they should have votes without being naturalised. On the contrary, it was pointed out to them that if they were naturalised they would give up their British citizenship, and that that was the only condition on which we could claim the franchise for them. We give to the Uitlanders exactly what we asked for ourselves. We say, "You shall be naturalised, if you like, after five years residence, and when you are naturalised you, of course, give up your original citizenship and you will be entitled to all the privileges of British citizenship, including the municipal franchise." That disposes of the charge of inconsistency. Why should we do more than that? It is no more than we asked for ourselves; it is no more than we do here. To my mind it appears to be a perfectly reasonable arrangement, and it was one which I had no hesitation in approving. I deprecate the tone adopted by the hon. Member, and I really do not think it was necessary for him to have spoken with such violence and bitterness. I hope I have succeeded in convincing the Committee that the De Beers malign influence is not really apparent in any of these transactions. The position of the British Indian, which was raised by the right hon. Gentleman, will, I trust, be satisfied in what appears to me to be a reasonable way—that British Indians qualified by education and character to enjoy the franchise should be entitled to it. I admit the great difficulty of dealing with this Asiatic question. I admit there is this strong prejudice against Asiatics, but I would point out that all the praise that is given and all the enthusiasm that is aroused among hon. Members opposite by the decision of the Transvaal and the South African Colonies to exclude Asiatics is precisely on the same lines as the feeling which leads them to treat them as an inferior race when they do get to the Transvaal. My own opinion on this subject has been sufficiently clearly expressed, and I sincerely hope that some reasonable arrangements may be made in the future.

I come next to the question of Malta, which is a very simple one. I know the interest the hon. Member for South Kerry takes, not only in the language question, but also in the question of education generally. He has quite generously given me credit for having been considerate in this matter, and for, as he says, the three substantial concessions which I was able to make to the desires, I will not say of the population of Malta, but of the elected members. When this matter was last before the House I explained at great length our views, and it is unnecessary to repeat what I then said. What I then did was to withdraw the proclamation which had given, or was said to have given, considerable offence, and which declared that the English language should be the official language of Malta twenty years hence. I said then I never attached any importance to that proclamation; that, on the whole, I was prepared to admit that it had been ill-advised, as it was never worth while legislating for twenty years in advance. And having regard, also, to a certain sentiment which had arisen on the subject in Italy, I was very willing to take the opportunity of yielding. I also yielded, as the hon. Member said, on certain matters of considerable importance, and I expressed a hope that the elected members would recognise this and be conciliatory on their side. But there was one point on which I said His Majesty's Government would never yield—I will go further and say I do not believe any Government who may succeed us will yield on this particular point—and that was that the people of Malta should themselves, personally and individually, not have the choice of the second language which should be taught to their children. I would do everything to make that choice absolutely free, absolutely independent; but I would not take that choice away to please the little knot of elected members who, as I have pointed out before now, have really very little influence with the population. It is quite true they get to be elected members. It is quite true that I should not think of putting up Government nominees, as the hon. Member suggested, to stand against them. But it is equally true that no person in the better-educated classes of Malta will take part in politics and stand for this position. I very much regret it. I think it shows a want of enterprise and even of patriotism, but I cannot alter their decision. I am told it is due to their fear of the bitter and libellous attacks which are made on every one in public life by the local papers, which are carried on by some of the elected members themselves. I have seen those papers, and they certainly are very often extremely scurrilous, and I can quite understand people not accustomed to the rough and tumble of political life thinking it hardly worth while to go through so much to get so little. The position of the elected member is not of so much importance as to justify a man making considerable sacrifices of his personal comfort, and if he takes part against an elected member neither his public nor his private life is safe from his criticism. The policy of the Government is confined, therefore, strictly to seeing that the parents have a personal and individual choice. We will not allow the so-called elected members to speak for them. We think they had better speak for themselves.

The hon. Member opposite has been entirely misinformed when he says that the choice is not a free choice, and that the choice of the parents is conveyed through the children. It is nothing of the kind. It is made the most formal act possible. It has to be made either in writing or before two witnesses, and the documents and the evidence of the choice made are carefully preserved, and the records are at the disposal of anyone who desires to see them. How better, in what other way, would it be possible to obtain the personal wishes of the parents in regard to the education of their children? What annoys these elected members is this, that they go to public meetings and are able, as many of us are at meetings of our friends, to pass their resolutions in favour of the Italian language, and that then the very people who have passed these resolutions go back home and sign documents in favour of English. I confess I am gratified. The hon. Member seems to think it very wrong because the Government said they heard with satisfaction the result of the choice of the parents. I really do not think I am at all wrong in expressing my pleasure at finding, in a British colony, this large proportion of native parents selecting the British language in preference to any other. What has happened ? The number of parents choosing English in 1898 was 95 per cent., in 1899, 97 per cent., and 1900, 98 per cent. Then there was an agitation, and when it was at its height some of the parish priests, who have, naturally and rightly, a very great interest in their flock, intervened, and suddenly, therefore, the percentage fell from 98 to 75 per cent. But the agitation died away, and the result was that in 1902 the percentage had again risen to 85 per cent. I do not think the hon. Member can make any complaint as to our action in regard to the elementary schools—it is in regard to the lyceums. In the lyceums both languages are offered to all the scholars, and here again I believe a very considerable proportion have what the elected members consider the bad taste to prefer English to Italian, but if they prefer Italian they can have it. The hon. Member called attention to the statement that seven Italian professors are employed and eleven English. Well, I think that is a very remarkable percentage of Italian under the circumstances. When you find that the elementary schools, which necessarily feed the secondary or lyceum schools, choose English in the proportion of 85 per cent., I think it is a remarkable thing that the language which is least popular has nevertheless seven, as against eleven, of the teachers employed. It seems to me we are lending our weight as far as we possibly can in favour of Italian rather than putting it under any disadvantage.

The recent action taken by the Government is in accordance with the warning which was distinctly given in my speech of last April, when I discussed this subject. The hon. Member says, "Why did we not give them a little more time ?" Time ! We have given them time again and again. We begged them to be reasonable. When they have made amendments, if we could do it without any injury to Imperial interests, we have accepted them, even when we have thought them wrong. But what they have said is this, "Unless you give up this doctrine of free choice and allow us, the elected members, to decide for the parents of the children what language they shall be taught, we refuse all the Education Estimates." They retired into that impossible position ; they did it again the other day. We gave them another opportunity; they passed one month's Vote. Then it had to be brought forward again, and then they rejected the 11 months which remained. We brought it forward again, and gave them a further opportunity, asking them whether they would not consider the subject once more, but they rejected the whole of the Education Vote. Then the constitution of 1887 was reverted to ; that constitution suits us, and I may say it suits them. If I may believe anything that the elected members themselves say it suits them at least as well as the constitution which the hon. Gentleman says we have suspended. We have not suspended it—it has disappeared, and we have reverted to the older system. But how was the system we have got rid of described by the elected members ? Were they grateful for it ? We had actually given to these people, who were elected at a General Election by 2,000 votes among the lot, out of a population of 180,000, the right to deal as they pleased with the whole finances of the colony—they could refuse any Vote and bring the whole thing to a standstill. We did this relying on their good sense, but I have shown how they dealt with matters in which they differed from us. And they all spoke in the strongest possible terms against even that constitution which gave them absolute power over the purse, as being altogether insufficient for national needs, and they claimed to have not merely representative government, but responsible government, and they would have made our position in the fortress a perfect and absolute farce. They played this ridiculous game a little too long, but now I am confident that we shall have no further trouble.

Passing from that, I feel sorry I am unable to concede what my hon. friend the Member for the Abercromby Division asked me so gracefully. He does not ask it of me personally, but from the State, and there I have a certain public duty to fulfil. It is in accordance with that duty that I am obliged to refuse his application. He applied for compensation for certain Liverpool firms whose property was destroyed during a rebellion which took place at Sierra Leone. Well, the common law and general practice of all countries is that in such cases the liability rests with the individual, and the State is not liable. Where either foreigners or its own subjects reside in a country under these conditions they must take all the risks, and the State is not liable for damage done to them either by insurgents in a rebellion, or by His Majesty's forces in repressing a rebellion, if they have proceeded in a reasonable way. It is not contended for a moment that in this case His Majesty's forces did not proceed in a reasonable way, and it is perfectly certain that if they had not destroyed some of these sheds or factories the insurgents would have done so, and would have seized for their use all the stores they contained. Although, therefore, I have every sympathy with the persons who have suffered, just as I should have if, without any rebellion at all, the factories had been burnt down, or any other accident had happened to them, yet I cannot make a precedent which would be so very far-reaching. Such a precedent might be applied so widely that I really do not know in what position the Chancellor of the Exchequer might be, or what unforeseen obligations might not be cast upon us. I fear we must adhere to what has been almost our invariable rule in these matters, and say that this is one of the chances which have to be considered by those who engage in trade under such circumstances, and who, I cannot help thinking, are apt to take such chances into consideration when they fix the rate of profit on their manufactures.

The MASTER of ELIBANK (Edinburgh, Midlothian) asked whether ex-Civil servants of the late Transvaal Government would be employed by Lord Milner in our Civil Service at Pretoria. He hoped we were not going to make the mistake made by Sir Theophilus Shepstone.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: Where they are suited to the work he is not proscribing them in any way.

MR. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland) said he desired to call attention to the condition of affairs in the Fiji Islands. It was some thirty years ago since regulations were introduced for the better government of the Fiji natives, which were intended solely and wholly for their benefit. The idea was that the Government should act as a sort of co-operative store to whom the natives could sell their produce; but the Fijians never relinquished their sovereignty over the islands. Whatever regulations might have been made by Sir Arthur Gordon, he believed they were utterly out-of-date and insufficient for the carrying out of the work of civilisation and the settlement of those islands. It was common knowledge that a large amount of forced labour was employed in those islands to the detriment of the Fijian natives, and they complained most bitterly that they were not allowed to work when they pleased and for whom they pleased, and they might be said in every respect to be the slaves of the Government. He would not for a moment say anything which would tend to make the administration of affairs there more difficult, and he did not mean to make any attack upon the Colonial Secretary, who was, he believed, doing the best he could in the matter. It was, however, his duty to let as much daylight into such places as possible, and he did not think the present state of affairs in Fiji was at all creditable to this country, or that it was in the interests of the natives. Something like a state of forced labour existed there. No doubt it would be said that it was a good thing for them to work, and that they would only be in mischief if they did not work. That might be said of a lot of other people besides Fijians. These natives were ordered here and there at the bidding of Government officials, and it was with the very greatest difficulty that those officials could be kept within fair bounds, and the tyranny which was inherent in human nature constantly broke out in dealing with people of this kind. The natives complained that they were set to work on Government roads, and had to act as police and work at places thirty or forty miles away from their homes. Their grievances had found vent in a petition which had been sent to the King. As far as he knew the right hon. Gentleman had never seen the petition. It was signed by considerably over 10,000 of these natives, and it set out their grievances in a piteous way. Their population was decreasing to a great extent, and they desired not only that their grievances should be redressed, but that in the matter of Government they should be formally handed over to New Zealand.

The main grievance was that they suffered exactions at the hands of the administrators. They said they were exploited for the benefit of those people, that they were not in any way allowed a free hand, or to do as they pleased, but that virtually and to all intents and purposes they really were slaves. In these days when people really heard of such abuses as had been brought to light in connection with American administration they could not be too particular in endeavouring to throw as much light as they could on the affairs of a large number of His Majesty's subjects, who relied upon the faith, honesty, and goodwill of this country, and had demanded our protection in order that they should enjoy the privilege of living under such a civilisation as ours. He had no hesitation in saying that the Fijians were better off 30 years ago than now. They might have more wars then, but they enjoyed themselves to their hearts' content. One of the complaints they made was with reference to forced labour, and another related to deportation. Without rhyme or reason they were taken from one island to another, and though they did not starve, for bountiful nature had provided plenty of food, they suffered in being taken from their wives and families. They were an affectionate and grateful people, to whom it was nothing short of torture to be taken away and thrown on a desolate shore. That was done because the administrators thought it ought to be done. He was justified in demanding for these people a little more freedom from the exactions which were constantly pressed upon them. The tax-gatherer was ever at their door. He had asked the Colonial Secretary a number of Questions upon this matter, and from the Answers he had received he was sure that the right hon. Gentleman looked upon it rather sympathetically than otherwise. From all he could learn, the Colonial Secretary was sincerely hopeful that under the present Governor a new state of affairs would be brought about.

There had been one or two special cases brought before the right hon. Gentleman. One referred to a native who was taken out, and upon evidence on which they would not hang the commonest dog, was tied to a tree and cruelly flogged. The right hon. Gentleman, in answering a question on this matter, said the native had committed an abominable outrage on a white woman. It was the first time he had heard the suggestion that that crime had been committed, and he believed that if such an accusation had been brought forward at the time and found proven the man would have deserved not merely 25 lashes but a good hanging, and he would probably have got it. He believed the right hon. Gentleman was misinformed with regard to the flogging of that native. He himself was informed that the man was flogged illegally by order of a resident magistrate. The law required that a medical man must be present when a native man was flogged, and on this occasion there was no medical officer present. The medical officer who should have been there, but who was not asked, was cruelly persecuted because he afterwards endeavoured to throw the light of day on this transaction. Hundreds of natives had been put in prison for signing a respectful petition to the King. It was such a petition as any Member of this House would have signed if it had been put before him. It was not sent back to the administrators because it was felt that severe punishment would fall on those who had signed it, and took part in getting it up. The islands are flourishing. There were over 100,000 people there to whom we ought to pay every respect and attention. The land belonged to them, and he was sorry to say that there were cases, as the right hon. Gentleman would find if he enquired, where large tracts had been acquired most unjustly and without any payment whatever. That showed the necessity of making a searching inquiry into these matters. If such transactions had taken place, they should be annulled without the slightest delay. He was very glad to have this opportunity of representing the views of a very large portion, he might say the greater portion, of the Fijian population, who deserved to have their grievances carefully and fully enquired into.

MR. THOMAS SHAW (Hawick Burghs) said he desired to call the attention of the Colonial Secretary to a special grievance with regard to South Africa. He referred to the way in which military receipts, granted by officers during the late campaign, were being dealt with. There was a widespread feeling of dissatisfaction in South Africa on that subject, and he believed from private information that had reached him, that if there was a strong utterance upon it by the Colonial Secretary it would largely allay the discontent which was felt. The situation was this. The method of securing the money which stood against those receipts was the most unbusiness-like proceeding, or at least very expensive, because long distances must be traversed by those who held them. He was informed that after they had traversed long distances they were informed that having been convened to a particular Court, they must go to another Court. After travelling a long distance to the second Court, they were in some cases even sent to a third. That was a serious matter for people who were at the door of poverty. Added to that there was the system of compounding, which was considered to be extremely hard. They were convened to one quarter and having gone there at much expense they were convened to another, and sometimes to a third, and after all that they were compounded with on what were considered to be niggardly terms. In this way very considerable discontent had been created. He was not to be taken as for one moment challenging the action of the authorities in regard to the method of compounding, and he admitted that there must have been exorbitant claims in regard to values. But he said that this case was to be taken as distinct from that of losses for which compensation was to be paid. This was the case of receipts granted by the military authorities, and the only question was as to value and not as to quantity. There seemed to be an impression abroad, and he earnestly hoped there was no foundation for it, that part of the inquiry into these receipts was to ask the history and record of the claimant, and that, according to the opinion of the authorities of that record, their appraisement was high or low. This seemed so incredible that he was quite sure the right hon. Gentleman the Colonial Secretary would emphatically repudiate any proceedings of that kind. There was a third matter he wished to mention. Some time ago the right hon. Gentleman made a speech in which he stated to the House that these military receipts would be honoured, and nothing in the last months of the history of the war had given more satisfaction in South Africa. On all hands it was admitted that the Dutch farmers, whose properties had been devasted as the result of the war, and who had obtained military receipts, the moment that speech was delivered, went in large numbers to the authorities and presented their receipts. That showed that the Dutch of all kinds of political opinion gladly welcomed the statement and acted upon it. That was the best tribute which could have been made to the right hon. Gentleman after his visit to South Africa. But notwithstanding the right hon. Gentleman's assurance, there were still enormous delays in the settlement of these Dutch farmers' claims, and those which had been disposed of had been settled, it was alleged, on a totally inadequate footing. All he asked was that the right hon. Gentleman would repeat, for the benefit of these Dutch farmers, his authoritative statement that these claims would be promptly and fully met. He had no doubt that the prompt and full settlement of the receipts granted by British officers would have a far-reaching and pacific effect. He had no object to serve except the restoration of peaceful feelings and hearty goodwill amongst these Dutch farmers, and he hoped the right hon. Gentleman would be able to give some consoling information of the kind he had indicated.

*MR. CHARLES DEVLIN (Galway) said the right hon. the Colonial Secretary had dealt at length with every question raised in the debate, except that which, in his opinion, was the most important.

There was a feeling in Canada, as well as in this country, that the position should be made absolutely clear as to what was known as the German difference with Canada. This was a matter of fair play and justice to Canada, because there had been no begging on the part of Canada to the Colonial Secretary or to this Government to interfere in the difficulty between Canada and Germany. He knew the Canadians did not like to be represented in any way in the light of beggars. Canadians had a natural pride, and they were justified in the belief that they could make their own fiscal arrangements, and that, when made, they were able to look after them. He was glad to hear the right hon. the Colonial Secretary say that he would do his best to provide a copy of the *Debates* in the Canadian Parliament in the library. The thing was easy, and he knew that the Canadian Government would put at the disposal of this House not only the *Debates*, but all their Blue-books. He would ask the Colonial Secretary if, only recently, Sir Wilfrid Laurier said—in regard to the dispute between Canada and Germany—that the first step towards a peaceful solution must come from Germany, and that Canada could not, until then, take any further action. Only the other day the editor of one of the leading papers in Canada was sent over here, by his paper, to see what the reason was for all these difficulties, and all this agitation on matters not only affecting preferential tariffs but in regard to Germany. After all the Colonial Secretary was the chief intermediary between the Canadian Government and His Majesty's Government, and to him they should apply for information, and he would ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he did not know that when he came to make his proposals he would find a large measure of public opinion in Canada was against him? He would ask the right hon Gentleman whether a Resolution or an Address, which had been passed by the Canadian House of Commons in its present session, approving of a measure of justice towards Ireland in regard to the land question, and of a measure for Home Rule, had been received by him, and, if so, why it had not been brought before the notice of this House. He knew a Resolution was passed by the Canadian House of Parliament, and it would be a matter of exceeding interest to Members of the British House of Commons to have the document before them. There was also another Resolution to which he invited attention, and he would first offer a word of explanation. Let them consider what elements went to make up the population of Canada. The Colonial Secretary the other night spoke of the people of Canada as his children. Who were those children? First there were 2,000,000 of French Canadians; then there were great numbers of Russians, Poles and Germans, as well as Irishmen. The right hon. Gentleman could hardly call them his children.

*THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order! I fail to see what all this has to do with the Colonial Office Vote.

*MR. CHARLES DEVLIN said he was calling attention to a Resolution which he was sure had reached the Colonial Office from Canada, and which it was desirable should be communicated to the House. It was one asking that the Royal Declaration on the Accession should be changed.

*THE CHAIRMAN: That really has nothing to do with the Colonial Office Vote.

*MR. CHARLES DEVLIN said he understood all communications between the Government and Canada passed through the Colonial Office, and this particular Resolution seriously concerned the French Canadians.

*THE CHAIRMAN said the Vote really had nothing to do with the composition of the Canadian people. The hon. Gentleman is entitled to ask if certain documents have been received, or will be presented, but he is not entitled to try and show why the Canadian Parliament passed a certain resolution.

*MR. CHARLES DEVLIN was sorry the rules of debate were so restricted that he could hardly mention anything. In the Canadian Parliament, of which he was once a Member, a great deal more latitude was granted. He now wished to ask if any representations had been made by the Canadian Government to the Colonial Office with regard to the purchase in Canada of horses and stock for South Africa.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.) thought the last speaker was perfectly entitled to ask the Colonial Secretary if he had received any Resolution from the Canadian Parliament, for he was sure hon. Members would be greatly interested if these Resolutions were communicated to them, and he hoped that the hon. Member for Galway City, who, by reason of his wide experience of Colonial Legislatures could well give voice to colonial sentiments, would at least receive a courteous reply to his question. He desired on his own part to inquire whether any decision had been come to by the Commonwealth Parliament with regard to the Australian mail contracts, and had that decision been accepted by His Majesty's Government. He understood that the Commonwealth Government refused to enter into a mail contract with this country if coloured labour was employed on any of the steamers carrying mails. It would be a serious thing if the contract were refused on that ground. Personally, he was against the employment of coloured labour on ships subsidised by large sums of public money, but he believed that in certain cases it was almost inevitable. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would say if the Commonwealth Government had, on what appeared to many people to be a trivial ground, refused to enter into fresh mail contracts, and if so what course did His Majesty's Government propose to adopt so as to prevent any interruption of the mail service with Australia and New Zealand.

MR. BRYN ROBERTS (Carnarvonshire, Eifion) said there was a question in connection with South Africa which had not yet been touched upon, and that was a question of education, which was creating a very sore feeling in that part of the world. The statement was made that the schools were being used for the purpose of forcing children to learn English contrary to their desires, and endeavouring to wean them from their own nationality. It was a favourite delusion of Englishmen that if they could only teach other nations English they would become English in feeling, and lose all sense of their own nationality. There never was a greater delusion in the world, and he was sure that every effort made in South Africa to force English methods of education on the children, would only lead to the greatest mischief without bringing the slightest ameliorating effect on the Boers. Let the right hon. Gentleman reflect on the contrast presented by Wales and Ireland, and he would see the absolute folly of supposing that language affected the sentiment of nationality. In Ireland the language of the majority of the Irish people was English; in Wales it was Welsh, and yet the history of the past shewed how dissatisfaction reigned in Ireland, while the very reverse was the case in Wales. If any attempt was made to force on the people of South Africa what was a foreign language it would certainly lead to hostility. The right hon. Gentleman had made reference to Malta, and had said very truly that no child there was compelled to learn English unless the parents expressed a desire to that effect in writing. He asked the right hon. Gentleman to extend to South Africa the principle he had advocated in Malta. He quite recognised that it would be desirable for them to learn English, and he had no doubt that if they were left to follow their own inclinations they would eventually do so, but he was certain that if it was forced upon them they would resent it, and he hoped that any such intention would be abandoned.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN, in reply, said he was glad to give the hon. Member the most complete and satisfactory assurance in the sense he desired. There was no attempt to force English on the children of the Boers, and their choice was as free as that of the people of Malta; and if there was any complaint whatever of anything to the contrary he would undertake personally to look into it. He had communicated not merely with Lord Milner, but with the heads of the Education Department in the two colonies. They both understood what was intended, and they both sympathised with it. And he might add that they had agreed to allow the predicants to go into the schools themselves to give teaching in Dutch or religion or any subject they liked, and also to send inspectors of their own appointment to go round the schools and see if there was anything of which they had any right to complain. Of course they had decided how many hours should be given to Dutch teaching, but any complaint either of the character of the teacher, or that he was using his position in order in any way to affect either the religion or the politics of the children, would certainly meet with attention, and they should take care to put a stop to it. In answer to the hon. Member for Clare, with regard to the Australian mail contract, it was the case that the Australian Government had informed the Colonial Office that they would no longer join in any contract or subsidy to any line which employed Asiatic labour. The Government had said, on the other hand, that they absolutely refused to put a prohibition on the employment of their fellow-subjects in those ships, and, therefore, the position was that when the present contract came to an end, they should each have to make their own arrangements. Australia would have a service served by all white men, and we should continue with our service served as at present by Lascars as well as white men. The matter, however, was not immediate, because the contract did not terminate till 1905. In answer to the hon. Member for Galway City, he had not heard that anybody had ever accused the Canadians of begging, and certainly he had not done so. What they had done was contained in the publications that were before the House, and everybody must learn for himself from them what the attitude of the Canadian Government had been. He had no knowledge of private correspondence with Sir Wilfrid Laurier such as had been alluded to by the right hon. Gentleman, and no statement such as that quoted had been brought before him. Then the hon. Member for the Border Burghs made a complaint as to the distribution of money for compensation for military receipts; he had an idea where the complaints came from, they might be true, but he did not believe they were; but the only way to deal with them was for those who received complaints to send them to him, and he would make inquiry into them. Of course he could not go into them for ever, and if he found they were false in the first instance, no doubt hon. Gentlemen would be satisfied with that assurance. The matter, however, was one of the greatest difficulty. The claims numbered, certainly, more than 100,000. There had been most grievous attempts at swindling, and a good number of them, he was afraid, had been successful. They could not hurry the matter more than they were doing. In regard to the question raised by the hon. Member for Orkney, they had in Sir H. Jackson a Governor who had shown the greatest ability, and he was, at the present moment, conducting an examination into the whole situation in the Fiji Islands. He would, however, warn hon. Members against being misled by information which was not to be relied upon. He did so because he saw the other day a meeting had been addressed by a particular gentleman who had recently been on a voyage to those islands, and if that gentleman was in any sense the informant of the hon. Member opposite, then he would warn the hon. Member that that gentleman's information was not to be relied on. The fullest inquiry would be made, and he hoped it might have good results. He did not think there was any general desire on the part of the natives, such as the hon. Gentleman seemed to suppose, to be annexed to New Zealand, but if there were it would raise a very difficult question in regard to Australasia, because Australia was as anxious as New Zealand in this matter. He hoped he might now take the Vote.

MR. CHARLES DEVLIN said he would like to repeat the Question he had put before, which was not answered by the right hon. Gentleman. He asked whether the right hon. Gentleman would lay on the Table the whole of the Resolutions passed this session by the Canadian Government, which, he understood, were addressed to the British Parliament.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: No, Sir. They were not addressed to this Parliament, or they would have been sent to Mr. Speaker.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: May I ask to whom they were addressed?

AN HON. MEMBER: Not to you.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: The hon. Gentleman says the Resolution as to

Home Rule was not addressed to me. May I be allowed to tell him that as a matter of fact it was. It was addressed to me in this regard, that it was addressed to the Home Rule Party, of which I am one. It declared that the Members of the Canadian Parliament were quite in accord with us in our demand for Home Rule.

*THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order. The statement of the hon. Member shews this has nothing to do with the Colonial Office Vote.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: No, Sir, I would not have been led into it except by the enthusiastic interruption of the hon. Gentleman opposite, whose constituency I am sure I don't know. I ask with all respect a Question which I think ought to be answered by the Colonial Secretary. I ask whether the right hon. Gentleman can state to whom the Resolution passed with reference to Home Rule in Ireland by the Canadian Parliament was addressed. Was it sent to anybody in this country? Was it sent to the Colonial Office?

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: I think the communication was sent to the Colonial Office, as are all communications from the Canadian Government.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: May I have a copy of it?

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: Surely the hon. Member does not want a copy of it. He says it was sent to him.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: I said it was addressed to me as a member of the Home Rule party. I wish to know whether I can have an official copy of what was sent to the right hon. Gentleman.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: Oh, yes, I will send it, certainly.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: Perhaps the right hon. Gentleman will send a copy to the hon. member opposite also.

MR. JOSEPH DEVLIN (Kilkenny, N.) rose to continue the debate, when

MR. SECRETARY CHAMBERLAIN rose in his place, and claimed to move,—"That the Question be now put."

Question put, "That the Question be now put."

The Committee divided: Ayes, 183; Noes, 83. (Division List No. 198.)

AYES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Allhusen, Aug. Henry Eden
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bailey, James (*Walworth*)
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (*Manch'r*
Balfour, Rt. Hn. G. W. (*Leeds*
Balfour, Kenneth R. (*Christch.*)
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benj.
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bignold, Arthur
Bigwood, James
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Butcher, John George
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cautley, Henry Strother
Cavendish, V. C. W. (*Derbyshire*
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Cecil, Evelyn (*Aston Manor*)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (*Greenwich*)
Chamberlain, Rt Hon J (*Birm*
Chamberlain, Rt Hn J. A. (*Worc*
Chamberlayne, T. (*Southmptn*
Chaplin, Right Hon. Henry
Chapman, Edward
Charrington, Spencer
Clare, Octavius Leigh
Cochrane, Hon. T. H. A. E
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Charles Ready
Corbett, A. Cameron (*Glasgow*)
Corbett, T. L. (*Down, North*)
Cranborne, Viscount
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Denny, Colonel
Dickson, Charles Scott
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Faber, E. B. (*Hants, W.*)
Faber, George Denison (*York*)
Fardell, Sir T. George
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson, Rt Hn. Sir J. (*Manc'r*
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Fisher, William Hayes
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Flower, Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Philip S. (*Warwick, S. W.*
Fyler, John Arthur
Gardner, Ernest
Gibbs, Hn A. G. H (*City of Lond*
Gibbs, Hn. Vicary (*St. Albans*
Godson, Sir Augustus Frederick
Gordon, J. (*Londonderry, S.*)
Gore, Hon. S. F. Ormsby-(*Linc.*
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, Hon. Geo. Joachim
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Greene, Henry D. (*Shrewsbury*)
Gretton, John
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Groves, James Grimble
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Hall, Edward Marshall
Hamilton, Rt Hn Lord G. (*Mid'x*
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Henderson, Sir A. (*Stafford, W.*)
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Houston, Robert Paterson
Howard, Jno. (*Kent, Faversham*
Howard, J. (*Midd., Tott'ham*
Jeffreys, Rt. Hn. Arthur Fred
Jessel, Capt. Herbert Merton
Johnstone, Heywood

Kemp, Lieut.-Colonel George
Kenyon, Hon. G. T. (*Denbigh*
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (*Glasgow*
Lawrence, Sir Jos. (*Monm'th*)
Lee, A. H. (*Hants., Fareham*)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Fredk. N. S.
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (*Bristol, S*
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Francis William
Lucas, Reginald J. (*Portsmouth*
Macdona, John Cumming
M'Arthur, Charles (*Liverpool*)
M'Killop, James (*Stirlingshire*
Majendie, James A. H.
Maxwell, Rt Hn. Sir H E (*Wigt'n*
Melville, Beresford Valentine
Mitchell, William (*Burnley*)
Montagu, G. (*Huntingdon*)
Montagu, Hon. J. Scott (*Hants.*)
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Morgan, D. J. (*Walthamstow*)
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mowbray, Sir Robt. Gray C.
Murray, Rt Hn A. Graham (*Bute*
Murray, Charles J. (*Coventry*)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (*Bath*
Nicholson, William Graham
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
Parkes, Ebenezer
Pease, H. Pike (*Darlington*)
Peel, Hn. Wm. R. Wellesley
Percy, Earl
Pierpoint, Robert
Pilkington, Colonel Richar
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Walter R.
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Rattigan, Sir William Henry
Reid, James (*Greenock*)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Renshaw, Sir Charles Bine
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. Chas. Thomson
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Rutherford, John (*Lancashire*)
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sadler, Col. Saml. Alexander
Saunderson, Rt. Hn. Col. E. J.
Seely, Charles Hilton (*Lincoln*
Seely, Maj. J. E. B. (*Isle of Wight*
Sinclair, Louis (*Romford*)
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Sloan, Thomas Henry.
Smith, Abel H. (*Hertford, East*
Smith, James Parker (*Lanarks*
Smith, Hn. W. F. D. (*Strand*)
Stanley, Edward Jas. (*Somerset*)
Stanley, Lord (*Lancs.*)
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Stroyan, John
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
Talbot, Lord E. (*Chichester*)
Talbot, Rt. Hn. J. G. (*Oxf'd Univ*
Taylor, Austin (*East Toxteth*)
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Valentia, Viscount
Vincent, Col. Sir C. E H (*Sheffield*
Walrond, Rt. Hn. Sir William H
Webb, Col. William George
Whiteley, H (*Ashton und-Lyne*
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wills, Sir Frederick
Wilson, John (*Falkirk*)
Wilson, John (*Glasgow*)
Wilson-Todd, W. H. (*Yorks.*)
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (*Bath*
Worsley-Taylor, Hry. Wilson
Wortley, Rt. Hn. C. B. Stuart
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Wyndham Quin, Major W. H.

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Allen, Charles P. (*Glouc., Stroud*
Barlow, John Emmott
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Bayley, Thomas (*Derbyshire*)
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Brigg, John
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Burt, Thomas
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Campbell, John (*Armagh, S.*)
Cawley, Frederick
Channing, Francis Allston
Cremer, William Randal
Delany, William
Devlin, Chas. Ramsay (*Galway*
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (*Lanark*)
Fenwick, Charles
Ferguson, R. C. Munro (*Leith*
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmond
Foster, Sir Walter (*Derby Co.*)
Fuller, J. M. F.
Griffith, Ellis J.
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-
Hayter, Rt Hon Sir Arthur D.
Helme, Norval Watson
Henderson, Arthur (*Durham*)
Holland, Sir William Henry
Humphreys-Owen, Arthur C.
Joicey, Sir James
Jones, David, B. (*Swansea*)
Jones, Wm. (*Carnarvonshire*)
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kilbride, Denis
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (*Cornwall*
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leamy, Edmund
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Lloyd-George, David
Lundon, W.
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Arthur, William (*Cornwall*)
M'Laren, Sir Charles Benj.
Markham, Arthur Basil
Mitchell, Edw. (*Fermanagh, N.*)
Moss, Samuel
Nolan, Joseph (*Louth, South*)
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, Patrick (*Kilkenny*)
O'Brien, P. J. (*Tipperary, N.*)
O'Kelly, J. (*Roscommon, N.*)
O'Mara, James
Partington, Oswald
Pearson, Sir Weetman D.
Price, Robert John
Rea, Russell
Redmond, William (*Clare*)
Reid, Sir R. Threshie (*Dumfries*
Roberts, John Bryn (*Eifion*)
Runciman, Walter
Russell, T. W.
Shaw, Thomas (*Hawick, B*
Sheehan, Daniel Daniel
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (*Forfarshire*)
Soares, Ernest J.
Spencer, Rt Hn C. R. (*Northants*
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Theo. C. (*Radcliffe*)
Thomas, David Alfred (*Merthyr*
Thomas, F. Freeman (*Hastings*)
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Wason, E. (*Clackmannan*)
Wason, John Cathcart (*Orkney*
Weir, James Galloway
White, Luke (*York, E. R.*)
Whiteley, G. (*York, W. R.*)
Wilson, Henry J. (*York, W.R.*)

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Joseph Devlin and Mr. Whitley.

Question put accordingly.

The Committee divided: Ayes, 76; Noes, 183. (Division List No. 199.)

AYES.

Allen, Chas. P. (*Glos., Stroud*)
Barlow, John Emmott
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Bayley, Thomas (*Derbyshire*)
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Brigg, John
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Burt, Thomas
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Cawley, Frederick
Channing, Francis Allston
Cremer, William Randal
Delany, William
Devlin, Chas. Ramsay (*Galway*)
Devlin, Joseph (*Kilkenny, N.*)
Doogan, P. C.

Douglas, Charles M. (*Lanark*)
Fenwick, Charles
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmund
Foster, Sir Walter (*Derby Co.*)
Fuller, J. M. F.
Griffith, Ellis J.
Harwood, George
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Chas. Seale-
Hayter, Rt Hon Sir Arthur D.
Helme, Norval Watson
Henderson, Arthur (*Durham*)
Holland, Sir William Henry
Humphreys-Owen, Arthur C.
Joicey, Sir James
Jones, David Brynmor (*Swans'a*
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kilbride, Denis
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (*Cornwall*
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leamy, Edmund
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Lloyd-George, David
Lundon, W.
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Arthur, William (*Cornwall*
M'Laren, Sir Charles Benj.
Moss, Samuel
Nolan, Joseph (*Louth, S.*)
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, Patrick (*Kilkenny*)
O'Brien, P. J. (*Tipperary, N.*)
O'Kelly, J. (*Roscommon, N.*)
Partington, Oswald
Pearson, Sir Weetman D.
Price, Robert John
Rea, Russell
Redmond, William (*Clare*)
Reid, Sir R. Threshie (*Dumfries*)
Roberts, John Bryn (*Eifion*)
Runciman, Walter
Shaw, Thomas (*Hawick, B.*)
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (*Forfarshire*)
Soares, Ernest J.
Spencer, Rt. Hn C. R. (*North'nts*
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Theodore C. (*Radcliffe*
Thomas, David A. (*Merthyr*)
Thomas, F. Freeman (*Hastings*
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Wason, Eugene (*Clackmannan*)
Wason, J. Cathcart (*Orkney*)
Weir, James Galloway
White, Luke (*York, E. R.*)
Whitley, J. H. (*Halifax*)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wilson, Henry J. (*York, W.R.*

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Brampton Gurdon and Mr. Markham.

NOES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Allhusen, Augustus Henry Eden
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bailey, James (*Walworth*)
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (*Man'r*
Balfour, Rt. Hn. G. W. (*Leeds*
Balfour, Kenneth R. (*Christch.*)
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bignold, Arthur
Bigwood, James
Bill, Charles
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Butcher, John George
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cautley, Henry Strother
Cavendish, V C W (*Derbysh.*)
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Cecil, Evelyn (*Aston Manor*)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (*Greenwich*)
Chamberlain, Rt Hon J (*Birm*
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J A (*Worc*
Chamberlayne, T. (*South'mpt'n*
Chaplin, Right Hon. Henry
Chapman, Edward
Charrington, Spencer
Clare, Octavius Leigh
Cochrane, Hon. T. H. A. E.
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Chas. Ready
Corbett, A. Cameron (*Glasg.*)
Corbett, T. L. (*Down, North*)
Cranborne, Viscount
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Denny, Colonel
Dickson, Charles Scott
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers
Doxford, Sir Wm. Theodore
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Faber, Edmund B. (*Hants, W.*
Faber, George Denison (*York*)
Fardell, Sir T. George
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Ed.
Fergusson, Rt Hn. Sir J. (*Man'r*
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Fisher, William Hayes
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Flower, Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster, P. S. (*Warwick, S.W.*
Fyler, John Arthur
Gibbs, Hn A. G. H (*City of Lond*
Gibbs, Hn. Vicary (*St. Albans*
Godson, Sir Augustus Fredk.
Gordon, J. (*Londonderry, S.*)
Gore, Hn. S. F. Ormsby- (*Linc*
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, Hon. Geo. Joachim
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Greene, Hy. D. (*Shrewsbury*)
Gretton, John
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Groves, James Grimble
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Hall, Edward Marshall
Hamilton, Rt Hn Lord G (*Midd'x*
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Henderson, Sir A. (*Stafford, W.*)
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Houston, Robert Paterson
Howard, Jno (*Kent, Faver'hm*
Howard, J. (*Midd., Tott'ham*
Jeffreys, Rt. Hn. Arthur Fred
Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
Johnstone, Heywood
Kemp, Lieut.-Colonel George
Kenyon, Hon. G. T. (*Denbigh*
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (*Glasgow*
Lawrence, Sir Jos. (*Monm'th*)
Lee, A. H. (*Hants, Fareham*)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N. S.
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Rt. Hn Walter (*Bristol, S.*
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Francis William
Lucas, Reg'ld J. (*Portsmouth*)
Macdona, John Cumming
M'Arthur, Charles (*Liverpool*)
M'Killop, Jas. (*Stirlingshire*)
Majendie, James A. H.
Maxwell Rt Hn Sir H. E. (*Wigt'n*
Melville, Beresford Valentine
Mitchell, Edw. (*Fermanagh, N.*
Mitchell, William (*Burnley*)
Montagu, G. (*Huntingdon*)
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Morgan, D. J. (*Walthamstow*)
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Murray, Rt Hn A. Graham (*Bute*
Murray, Charles J. (*Coventry*)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (*Bath*)
Nicholson, William Graham
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
Parkes, Ebenezer
Pease, H. Pike (*Darlington*)
Peel, Hn. Wm. R. Wellesley
Percy, Earl
Pierpoint, Robert
Pilkington, Colonel Richard
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Walter R.
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Rattigan, Sir William Henry
Reid, James (*Greenock*)
Remnant, Jas. Farquharson
Renshaw, Sir Charles Bine
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. C. Thomson
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Russell, T. W.
Rutherford, John (*Lancashire*
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford-
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Saunderson, Rt. Hn. Col. E. J.
Seely, Chas. Hilton (*Lincoln*)
Seely, Maj. J. E. B. (*Isle of Wight*
Sinclair, Louis (*Romford*)

Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smith, Abel H. (*Hertford, E.*)
Smith, Jas. Parker (*Lanarks.*)
Smith, Hn. W. F. D. (*Strand*)
Stanley, Edw. Jas. (*Somerset*)
Stanley, Lord (*Lancs.*)
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Stroyan, John
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
Talbot, Lord E. (*Chichester*)
Talbot, Rt Hn J. G. (*Oxf'd Univ.*
Taylor, Austin (*East Toxteth*)
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Valentia, Viscount
Vincent, Col Sir C. E. H (*Sheffield*
Walrond, Rt Hn Sir William H.
Webb, Col. William George
Whiteley, H. (*Ashton-u.-Lyne*)
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wills, Sir Frederick
Wilson, John (*Falkirk*)
Wilson, John (*Glasgow*)
Wilson-Todd, Sir W. H. (*Yorks*)
Wodehouse, Rt Hn E. R. (*Bath*
Worsley-Taylor, Henry Wilson
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Anstruther.

Whereupon MR. SECRETARY CHAMBERLAIN claimed, "That the Original Question be now put."

Original Question put accordingly.

The Committee divided: Ayes, 184; Noes, 74. (Division List No. 200.)

AYES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Allhusen, Aug. Henry Eden
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bailey, James (*Walworth*)
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (*Manch'r.*
Balfour, Rt. Hn. G. W. (*Leeds*
Balfour, Kenneth R. (*Christch*
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bignold, Arthur
Bigwood, James
Bill, Charles
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Butcher, John George
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cautley, Henry Strother
Cavendish, V. C. W. (*Derbyshire*
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Cecil, Evelyn (*Aston Manor*)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J. (*Birm.*
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J A (*Worc*
Chamberlayne, T. (*Southmptn*
Chaplin, Right Hon. Henry
Chapman, Edward
Charrington, Spencer
Clare, Octavius Leigh
Cochrane, Hon. Thomas H. A. E.
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Chas. Ready
Corbett, A. Cameron (*Glasg.*)
Corbett, T. L. (*Down, North*)
Cranborne, Viscount
Crossley, Rt. Hn. Sir Savile
Denny, Colonel
Dickson, Charles Scott
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Doughty, George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers
Doxford, Sir Wm. Theodore
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Faber, E. B. (*Hants, W.*)
Faber, George Denison (*York*)
Fardell, Sir T. George
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Ed.
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J. (*Manc'r*
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Fisher, William Hayes
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Flower, Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster, P. S. (*Warwick, S. W.*
Fyler, John Arthur
Gibbs, Hn A. G. H (*City of Lond.*
Gibbs, Hn. Vicary (*St. Albans*
Godson, Sir Augustus Fredk.
Gordon, J. (*Londonderry, S.*)
Gore, Hn. S. F. Ormsby- (*Linc*
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir J. Eldon
Goschen, Hon. Geo. Joachim
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Greene, Hy. D. (*Shrewsbury*)
Gretton, John
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Groves, James Grimble
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Hall, Edward Marshall
Hamilton, Rt. Hn. Ld G. (*Midlx*
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Henderson, Sir A. (*Stafford, W.*)
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Houston, Robert Paterson
Howard, J. (*Kent, Faversham*
Howard, J. (*Midd., Tott nam*
Jameson, Major J. Eustace
Jeffreys, Rt. Hn. Arthur Fred
Jessel, Captain Herbert Merton
Johnstone, Heywood
Kemp, Lieut.-Colonel George
Kenyon, Hon. Geo. T. (*Denbigh*)
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (*Glasgow*)
Lawrence, Sir Jos. (*Monm'th*)
Lee, A. H. (*Hants, Fareham*)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N. S.
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (*Bristol S.*
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Francis William
Lucas, Reginald J. (*Portsmouth*
Macdona, John Cumming
M'Arthur, Charles (*Liverpool*)
M'Killop, James (*Stirlingshire*
Majendie, James A. H.
Melville, Beresford Valentine
Mitchell, Edw. (*Fermanagh, N.*
Mitchell, William (*Burnley*)
Montagu, G. (*Huntingdon*)
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Morgan, David J (*Walthamstow*
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Murray, Rt Hn A. Graham (*Bute*
Murray, Charles J. (*Coventry*)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (*Bath*)
Nicholson, William Graham
Orr-Ewing, Charles Lindsay
Parkes, Ebenezer
Pease, H. Pike (*Darlington*)
Peel, Hn. Wm. R. Wellesley
Percy, Earl
Pierpoint, Robert
Pilkington, Colonel Richard
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Walter R.
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Rattigan, Sir William Henry
Reed, Sir Edw. James (*Cardiff*)
Remnant, Jas. Farquharson
Renshaw, Sir Charles Bine
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. Chas. Thomson
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Russell, T. W.
Rutherford, John (*Lancashire*)
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sadler, Col. Samuel Alexander
Saunderson, Rt. Hn. Col. E. J.
Seely, Chas. Hilton (*Lincoln*)
Seely, Maj. J. E. B. (*Isle of Wight*
Sinclair, Louis (*Romford*)
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smith, Abel H. (*Hertford, East*
Smith, James Parker (*Lanarks*
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (*Strand*
Stanley, Ed. Jas. (*Somerset*)

Stanley, Lord (*Lancs.*)
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Stroyan, John
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
Talbot, Lord E. (*Chichester*)
Talbot, Rt Hn. J. G. (*Oxf'd Univ.*
Taylor, Austin (*East Toxteth*)
Thorburn, Sir Walter
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Valentia, Viscount
Vincent, Col. Sir C. E H (*Sheffield*
Walrond, Rt. Hn. Sir Wm. H.
Webb, Colonel William George
Whiteley, H. (*Ashton und. Lyne*
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wills, Sir Frederick
Wilson, John (*Falkirk*)
Wilson, John (*Glasgow*)
Wilson-Todd, Sir W. H. (*Yorks.*
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (*Bath*
Worsley-Taylor, Henry Wilson
Wortley, Rt. Hn. C. B. Stuart
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Allen, Chas. P. (*Glouc., Stroud*
Barlow, John Emmott
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Brigg, John
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Burt, Thomas
Caldwell, James
Cameron, Robert
Cawley, Frederick
Channing, Francis Allston
Cremer, William Randal
Delany, William
Devlin, Chas. Ramsay (*Galway*
Devlin, Joseph (*Kilkenny, N.*)
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (*Lanark*)
Fenwick, Charles
Fitzmaurice, Lord Edmund
Foster, Sir Walter (*Derby Co.*)
Fuller, J. M. F.
Griffith, Ellis J.
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Harwood, George
Hayne, Rt. Hn. Charles Seale-
Hayter, Rt Hon Sir Arthur D.
Helme, Norval Watson
Henderson, Arthur (*Durham*)
Holland, Sir William Henry
Humphreys-Owen, Arthur C.
Joicey, Sir James
Jones, David Brynmor (*Swansea*
Joyce, Michael
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kilbride, Denis
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (*Cornwall*
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leamy, Edmund
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Lundon, W.
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Arthur, William (*Cornwall*)
M'Laren, Sir Charles Benj.
Moss, Samuel
Nolan, Joseph (*Louth, S.*)
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, Patrick (*Kilkenny*)
O'Brien, P. J. (*Tipperary, N.*
O'Kelly, J. (*Roscommon, N.*)
Partington, Oswald
Pearson, Sir Weetman D.
Price, Robert John
Rea, Russell
Redmond, William (*Clare*)
Reid, Sir R. Threshie (*Dumfries*
Roberts, John Bryn (*Eifion*)
Runciman, Walter
Shaw, Thomas (*Hawick, B.*)
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (*Forfarshire*)
Soares, Ernest J.
Spencer, Rt Hn. C R. (*Northants*
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Theodore C. (*Radcliffe*
Thomas, David Alfred (*Merthyr*
Thomas, F. Freeman (*Hastings*
Wason, Eugene (*Clackmannan*
Wason, J. Cathcart (*Orkney*)
Weir, James Galloway
White, Luke (*York, E. R.*)
Whitley, J. H. (*Halifax*)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wilson, Henry J. (*York, W. R.*)

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Markham and Mr. Thomas Bayley.

EVENING SITTING

STANDING ORDERS.

*THE CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES (Mr. J. W. LOWTHER, Cumberland, Penrith) said the period of the session had arrived when the House should consider the Standing Orders for private business, and to make such alterations in them as might be necessary. The list of Amendments which appeared on the Paper was a long one, but he thought there was nothing controversial in it, or anything that need detain the House Last year a Committee was appointed to consider this question with a view to such alteration of the Standing Orders as might be desirable in the interests of efficiency, economy, and general convenience. hat Committee had made a great many recommendations and the Amendments which he had put down on the Paper were to carry out some of those recommendations. Others it was impossible to carry out without legislation. He thought the better way would be to make a short explanatory statement with regard to each Amendment before the Question was put from the Chair. He moved to amend Standing Order 29 in order to provide that in parishes which had no parish council the promoters of any Bill affecting matters within the parish should deposit such plans as might be required by Standing Orders with the chairman of the parish meeting, in order that he might be informed as to how his parish might be affected.

LORD EDMUND FITZMAURICE, (Wiltshire, Cricklade): Thought that this would be a great improvement to small parishes, which at the present time were put to great disadvantage in regard to Private Bills. At the same time he moved that the best plan would be to get these small parishes to merge with their larger neighbours. He supported the Amendment.

Standing Order 29, relating to Private Business, read, and amended, "in paragraph (D), by inserting in line 2, after the words 'Parish Council,' the words 'with the chairman of the parish meeting and.'"—(*The Chairman of Ways and Means.*)

*MR. J. W. LOWTHER said the next Amendment was destined to carry out the recommendations of the Committee. to substitute December 17 for December 21 as the date for depositing Petitions for Private Bills in the House. H said December 17 was the date in the House of Lords.

MR. WHITLEY (Halifax) saw no reason why the date for the House of Commons and for the House of Lords should not be the same, but suggested that it would be perhaps better to make the date the 21st. There was a great difficulty very often in getting municipal Bills ready as early as the 17th. The elections took place on the 1st November and the councils met for the first time on the 9th, and the right hon. Gentleman would quite appreciate the fact that the Committees had to be got into working order, and it was very often difficult to get a Bill ready by the 17th. Of course he would not press the matter against the convenience of the public departments, but municipal corporations promoted a great many Bills in this House, and he thought this small advantage should be given them.

SIR CHARLES RENSHAW (Renfrewshire, W.) expressed surprise at the view taken by the Member opposite, who seemed to forget that notice of all these Bills had to be given in the month of November. The date they proposed to fix now did not, therefore, affect the question, so far as the municipality was concerned, of the elections or the duties of the Committees. He believed the proposed Amendment would have a most beneficial effect.

Standing Order 32 read, and amended, "in line 5, by leaving out the word '21st,' and inserting the word '17th.'"—(*The Chairman of Ways and Means.*)

*MR. J. W. LOWTHER said the next Amendment was designed, like the last, to get the promoters to get on with their work. The object was to compel promoters of Bills to hold the Wharncliffe meeting within a reasonable period after the First Reading of the Bill. He hoped the result would be that the Committees would be able to commence work at an earlier period of the session than had been the case hitherto.

Standing Order 62 read, and amended, "in line 2, by leaving out the words 'after the first reading thereof,' and inserting the words 'within five weeks of the date on which the Petition for the same was endorsed by the Examiner.'"—(*The Chairman of Ways and Means.*)

*MR. J. W. LOWTHER said the next three Amendments were really only in order to bring the Standing Orders into accordance with the existing course of procedure. If accepted it would permit the counsel for Mr. Speaker to take counsel with the learned Chairman and his counsel as to the division of the Bills. They had also defined a date, the 28th January, for the drawing of Bills which had hitherto taken place on the first day of the session.

Standing Order 79 read, and amended, "in line 1, after the word 'Means,' by inserting the words 'or the Counsel to Mr. Speaker,' and by leaving out the words 'at the commencement of each session,' and inserting the words 'on or before the 28th day of January in each year.'"—(*The Chairman of Ways and Means.*)

"In line 3, by inserting after the word 'Lords,' the words 'or with his Counsel.'"—(*The Chairman of Ways and Means.*)

*MR. J. W. LOWTHER said the next Amendment carried the recommendation of the Committee, and designed to slightly reconstruct the Court of Referees. Under the present order the number of the Court of Referees was three. Mr. Speaker as a fact appointed seven, and this proposal was to bring the Standing Orders in accordance with the facts.

MR. WHITLEY asked, under this proposal were the duties to be divided Would the same persons as were on the Board of Referees be on the unopposed Bill Committee, and, if so, what distinction would be drawn before the Board?

*MR. J. W. LOWTHER, by leave of the House, explained that the duties of the Board of Referees and the Committe of unopposed Private Bills were not identical. The Referees appointed by Mr. Speaker were gentlemen of great legal ability, who considered strict questions of law, and all this amendment proposed was to enlarge the Court of Referees chiefly because in the past there had been difficulty in obtaining a quorum. The new proposal with regard to the Committee on unopposed Bills was this. At the present moment whenever the Committee was set up by the Standing Order it had to consist of the Chairman of Ways and Means, the Member whose name was on the back of the Bill, and a Member who had no interest in the matter. He had considered the recommendation of the Committee on the matter, and had thought it best to have a panel to select from. He had consulted the Chairman of the Committee of Selection on the subject, who first seemed to think it would not be possible, but subsequently came to the conclusion that it would be possible to form a panel, especially if hon. gentlemen now serving as referees would consent, if asked, to serve on the Unopposed Bill Committee.

"Standing Order 87, read and repealed, Ordered that the Chairman of Ways and Means, and the Deputy Chairman, with not less than seven other persons, who shall be Members of this House, and shall be appointed by Mr. Speaker for such periods as he shall think fit, shall be Referees of the House on Private Bills, and shall have the assistance of the Counsel to Mr. Speaker; such Referees to form one or more Courts, three at least to be required to constitute each Court."—(*The Chairman of Ways and Means.*)

Ordered, That this Order be a Standing Order of this House.

*Mr. J. W. LOWTHER said the next Amendment was simply to bring the Standing Order in accord with the fact. He begged to move.

Standing Order 98 read and amended, "In line 3, by leaving out the word 'seven' and inserting the word 'ten.'"—(*The Chairman of Ways and Means.*)

*MR. J. W. LOWTHER: The next he had already explained in reply to the hon. Member for Halifax.

MR. WHITLEY agreed that it was extremely desirable to improve the method of dealing with unopposed standing Bills. All he desired to suggest was that some method should be found to co-ordinate the work. It would be unfortunate if the Police and Sanitary Committee and the Unopposed Bill Committee worked on different lines.

*MR. J. W. LOWTHER said: Any unopposed Bill having police and sanitary clauses would go of course to the Police and Sanitary Committee. It was not intended to interfere with that. He quite agreed that the practice in these matters should be uniform.

Standing Order 109 read and amended, "In line 2, by leaving out from the word 'them,' to the end of the Standing Order, and inserting 'to the Committee on Unopposed Bills, which shall be composed of five Members, namely, the Chairman of Ways and Means (who when present shall be ex-officio Chairman of every such Committee), the Deputy Chairman, two Members from time to time selected by the Chairman of Ways and Means from a panel to be appointed by the Committee of Selection at the commencement of every session, and counsel to Mr. Speaker, and three shall be the quorum thereof.'"—(*The Chairman of Ways and Means.*)

*MR. J. W. LOWTHER said the next Amendment was to leave out a Standing Order dealing with road Bills, which did not now exist, and which would therefore become obsolete.

Standing Order 110, read, and repealed.—(*The Chairman of Ways and Means.*)

*MR. J. W. LOWTHER said the next was a novel one; the idea was that they might save a little time by compelling all petitions to be deposited on or before 12th February.

Standing Order 129, read and amended, "In line 6, by leaving out the words, 'not later than ten clear days after the First Reading of such Bill,' and inserting the words 'on or before the 12th day of February,' and at the end of the Standing Order to add the words, 'Provided that in the case of, (a) any Bill brought from the House of Lords; and (b) any Bill as to which compliance with the Standing Order as to the time for depositing the Bill has been dispensed with; and (c) any Bill promoted by the London County Council introduced under Standing Order 194; a petition against the Bill may be deposited at any time not later than ten clear days after the First Reading of the Bill.'"—(*The Chairman of Ways and Means.*)

*MR. J. W. LOWTHER said the next Amendment was also a new proposal, recommended by the Select Committee last year in order to obviate a difficulty in which they found themselves. It was a case in which a question arose as to the rates charged for the carriage of bicycles, and the Cyclists' Touring Club presented a petition on the ground that the rate was much too high. Their *locus standi* was objected to, and the Court of Referees decided that they had no power to give them one, because they were neither a chamber of commerce nor a chamber of agriculture nor any similar body. Seeing that the Cyclists' Touring Club represented cyclists generally, the decision was very hard upon them, but in fact their position was subsequently justified by the action of the House in striking out the excessive rates complained of and putting in reasonable ones. He begged to move.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE said there had been private Bills before the House in which bodies representing in some cases employers and in other cases employed had some distinct interest, but had not found it possible to be represented, and such cases had been dealt with by an Amendment of Standing Orders. That had been done in the case of the mines, but it had not been possible to do it in the case of the textile employers and employees of Lancashire, and he would suggest whether words could not be inserted to enable the representation of employers or employed in any particular trade. This matter had been considered by the Speaker's counsel, who was, he thought, somewhat favourable to some such alteration.

*MR. J. W. LOWTHER hoped the right hon. Gentleman would not move an Amendment. The point was a controversial one, and he had deliberately refrained from raising it on this occasion. It ought to be on the Paper some little time in order to give those interested an opportunity of studying it.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE said he felt the force of the appeal, but he had pointed out a case of hardship which ought to be dealt with. It was a case rather for the textile representatives, and he would not therefore move an Amendment.

MR. BRYCE hoped that when the question of amending 123 B came on, the Chairman of the Committee would consider the question of allowing persons not pecuniarily interested to represent certain phases of public policy on which they were entitled to be heard by reason of their experience and position.

Standing Order 133A read, and amended, in line 1, by leaving out the words 'Where a chamber of commerce or agriculture or other similar body, sufficiently representing a particular trade or business,' and inserting the words 'Where any body of persons corporate or incorporate sufficiently representing a particular trade, business, or interest.'"—(*The Chairman of Ways and Means.*)

"In line 4, by leaving out the words 'or business,' and inserting the words 'business or interest.'"—(*The Chairman of Ways and Means.*)

*MR. J. W. LOWTHER said the next Amendment had been pressed on him by the Chairman of the County Council of the West Riding of Yorkshire, and its object was to give the Joint Committee of a Council the right to be heard.

Standing Order 134B read, and amended, in line 3, by inserting after the word 'Borough,' the words 'or being a Joint Committee of Councils of administrative counties or County Boroughs.'"—(*The Chairman of Ways and Means.*)

*MR. J. W. LOWTHER said the object of the next Amendment was to carry out a recommendation of the Select Committee enabling a person in the occupation of a house in a street at right angles or in the immediate vicinity of a street when it was proposed to lay a tramway to have a *locus standi* and to appear.

Standing Order 135 read.

Amendment proposed—

"In lines 1 and 2, to leave out the words 'in any street,' and insert 'situate in or having its access materially dependent on any street or road.'"—(*The Chairman of Ways and Means.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the Standing Order."

Mr. WHITLEY hoped the Amendment would not be pressed. Petitioners who had only a vague interest might use their powers against the promoters for the sole purpose of blackmail. It would be a very dangerous thing to enlarge the sphere of objecting frontages in that vague way.

It would lead to considerably increased expense. He hoped the right hon. Gentlemen would reconsider the matter.

* Mr. J. W. LOWTHER said he was not aware the Amendment would meet with opposition, and under the circumstances he would not press it. He held that the referees should have power to determine whether petitions from round-the-corner petitioners should have a *locus standi*, but he was not prepared to frame the words on the spur of the moment, and he would see if later on he could bring it up in an amended form.

"Standing Order 137 read and repealed."—(*The Chairman of Ways and Means.*)

Mr. WHITLEY said he was in favour of this Amendment, but he feared that the wording would exclude from its operation municipal Bills where the promoters supplied themselves as well as other persons.

* Mr. J. W. LOWTHER said the point had been carefully considered by the Board of Trade, and he did not think there would be any difficulty such as the hon. Member seemed to fear.

LORD EDMUND FITZMAURICE thought the words were on the whole sufficient. This was one of the most important and valuable changes proposed, because these Electric Power Bills were increasing in number, and many difficult points had had to be dealt with in the past year. The clause would save a great deal of expense.

"Ordered, That in the case of any Bill relating to the generation of electricity for supply to persons or bodies other than the promoters, the Bill shall not be reported by the Committee until a Report from the Board of Trade on the powers sought has been laid before the Committee; and the Committee shall report specially to the House in what manner the recommendations or observations in the Report of the Board of Trade, and also in what manner the Clauses of the Bill relating to the powers sought, have been dealt with by the Committee."—(*The Chairman of Ways and Means.*)

"Ordered, That this Order be a Standing Order of this House."

*MR. J. W. LOWTHER said the next Amendment might almost be called a consequential Amendment. It would save the necessity of sending a Bill twice before the Examiners.

"Standing Order 193 read, and amended in line 2, by leaving out the words 'first presented, which shall have been duly,' and inserting the words 'which shall be.'"

"In line 3, by leaving out the words 'and indorsed by one of the Examiners.'"—(*The Chairman of Ways and Means.*)

*MR. J. W. LOWTHER said this next Amendment dealt with the date before which Provisional Orders must be read a first time. At present it was fixed for the 1st June, but it sometimes happened if Whitsuntide occurred before that, to be necessary to suspend Standing Orders in order to pass a Bill. This would obviate that necessity.

SIR WILLIAM TOMLINSON (Preston) suggested that it would be less ambiguous to provide that the First Reading should take place before the House rose for the Whitsuntide recess.

*MR. J. W. LOWTHER dissented, and said Whitsuntide was a date which anyone could discover by looking at the calendar.

Mr. WHITLEY hoped the Treasury would be induced to apply a similar provision to Money Bills.

"Standing Order 193A read, and amended at end by leaving out the words 'the 1st day of June,' and inserting the word 'Whitsuntide.'"—(*The Chairman of Ways and Means.*)

"Ordered, That all Private Bills shall on the day previous to the day fixed for their being laid upon the Table of the House be deposited in the Private Bill Office, and shall be laid by one of the Clerks of that Office on the Table of the House, together with a list of such Bills."—(*The Chairman of Ways and Means.*)

"Ordered, That this Order be a Standing Order of this House."

"Ordered, That where the Examiner has endorsed the Petition for a Private Bill 'Standing Orders complied with,' the Bill shall be presented by being laid upon the Table of the House not later than one clear day after such endorsement, or if when it is endorsed the House is not sitting, then not later than one clear day after the first sitting thereof subsequent to such endorsement, and if the House is not sitting on the latest day on which the Bill ought to be laid upon the Table of the House, then the Bill shall be so laid on the first day on which the House again sits. Where the Examiner has reported with respect to any Private Bill that the Standing Orders have not been complied with, and the Report has been referred to the Select Committee on Standing Orders, and the Select

Committee on Standing Orders have reported that the Standing Orders ought to be dispensed with, the Bill shall be presented by being laid upon the Table of the House not later than one clear day after the House has given leave to the parties to proceed with the Bill."—(*The Chairman of Ways and Means.*)

"Ordered, That this Order be a Standing Order of this House."

"Ordered, That a Private Bill shall, when laid on the Table of the House, be deemed to have been read a first time and ordered to be read a second time, or referred to the Examiners, as the case may be, on the day on which it is so laid, and shall be recorded in the Votes as having been so read."—(*The Chairman of Ways and Means.*)

"Ordered, That this Order be a Standing Order of this House."

"Standing Orders 195, 196, and 197 read, and repealed."—(*The Chairman of Ways and Means.*)

*MR. J. W. LOWTHER said the idea of the next Amendment was to enable the Committee upstairs to divide any Bill into two Bills, and separate the opposed from the unopposed Orders. The Committee would then be able to send down to the House the unopposed parts, and could then proceed without any further delay with the consideration of the opposed parts upstairs. That seemed to him to be a very convenient plan to pursue with regard to Provisional Orders. In the group of Provisional Orders contained in one Bill, some of them might be heavily contentious and the rest unopposed, and it seemed a hard fate for the unopposed Orders to have to wait for a considerable time while discussion was taking place with regard to the opposed Orders.

Standing Order 208A read, and amended, by "adding at end the words 'and may, if they think fit, divide the Bill into two Bills, dealing with the opposed and unopposed Orders or Certificates respectively and report the same separately.'"—(*The Chairman of Ways and Means.*)

*MR. J. W. LOWTHER said that with regard to the other Amendments on the Paper, he had satisfied himself that they were merely consequential, and he thought that they might be put as a single Question from the Chair.

Standing Order 33 read, and amended "in line 1, by leaving out the word '21st,' and inserting the word '18th.'"

Standing Order 34 read, and amended "in line 1, by leaving out the word '21st,' and inserting the word '18th.'"

Standing Order 63 read, and amended "in lines 4 and 5, by leaving out the words 'after the First Reading thereof be referred,' and inserting the words 'within five weeks of the date on which the Petition for the same was indorsed by the Examiner be referred again.'"

Standing Order 66 read, and amended "in line 1, by inserting after the word '(Bill),' the words '(originating in this House either as).'"

"In line 9, by leaving out the words 'before the Second Reading in this House,' and inserting the words 'within five weeks of the date on which the Petition for the same was indorsed by the Examiner.'"

Standing Order 67 read, and amended, "in line 4, by leaving out the words 'after the First Reading thereof be referred,' and inserting the words 'within five weeks of the date on which the Petition for the same was indorsed by the Examiner be referred again.'"

Standing Order 84 read, and amended, "in line 7, by leaving out the words '33A and 60A,' and inserting the words '34A,' and by leaving out the word '21st,' and inserting the word '18th.'"

Standing Order 92 read, and amended, "in lines 3 and 4, by leaving out the words '(and after the Petition for the Bill shall have been duly presented).'"

Standing Order 104 read, and repealed, Ordered, "That the General Committee on Railway and Canal Bills shall refer every unopposed Railway or Canal Bill to the Committee on Unopposed Bills."

Ordered, "That this Order be a Standing Order of this House."

Standing Order 107 read, and amended, 'in line 2, by leaving out the words 'not later than ten clear days after the First Reading thereof,' and inserting the words 'within the time appointed by Standing Order 129.'"

Standing Order 194B read, and amended "in line 10, by leaving out the word '21st,' and inserting the word '17th.'"

"In line 17, by leaving out the words 'The Petition for the Bill may be presented forthwith and.'"

"In line 18, by inserting after the word '(shall),' the words 'as soon as may be after the deposit of the Petition.'"

"In lines 18 and 19, by leaving out the words, 'not later than the second sitting day after the presentation of the Petition.'"

Standing Order 210 read, and amended, "In line 2, by leaving out the words, 'Not later than ten clear days after the First Reading of such Bill,' and inserting the words 'Within the required time.'"

Standing Order 230 read and amended, "In line 3, by leaving out the word, '21st,' and inserting the word, '17th.'"

"In line 11, by leaving out the word, '21st,' and inserting the word, '17th.'"

Table of Fees read, and amended—

"In line 5, by leaving out the words, 'the Petition for.'"

"In line 12, by leaving out the word, 'Petition,' and inserting the word, 'presentation"—(*The Chairman of Ways and Means.*)

Standing Orders, as amended, to be printed. [No 298.]

SUPPLY.—[20TH ALLOTTED DAY.]

Considered in Committee:—

(In the Committee.)

[MR. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith), in the Chair.]

CLASS V.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £284,780, be granted to His Majesty, to complete the sum necessary to defray the charge which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1904, for the expenses in connection with His Majesty's Embassies, Missions, and Consular Establishments abroad, and other expenditure chargeable to the Consular Vote."

MR. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.) said he desired to call attention to the report of the Committee appointed to inquire into the constitution of the consular service abroad, and he desired to ask the Government what course they proposed to take in reference to the report of that Committee. The condition of the consular service had been a subject of frequent debate in the House of Commons for a long time, not only among hon. Members representing the commercial classes, but also the service Members. Great interest had also been taken in the matter by the general public. Most of them felt that the condition of the consular service was very unsatisfactory, and required to be brought up to the level of a regular branch of the service. He agreed that there were a great many able and zealous men amongst their consuls abroad. Everyone who had travelled often had felt when he went to a foreign town and called upon His Majesty's consul that he learned more in a short conversation with the British consul than he would have found out by long observation on his own part with regard to the commercial condition of the country in which he might be travelling. A great many of the consular reports contained information valuable to commercial men, which shed a great deal of light upon the economic conditions of the countries concerned. But having said that they must also agree that those merits were not universal, and not so general as they might be, and consequently there were real grounds for the complaints that had been made. Those complaints might be summed up under two heads. In the first place there was far too much of the element of mere patronage in appointing consuls; and in the second place far too much patronage in regard to promotion. A man was often put into the consular service without any recommendation, and it frequently happened that his progress in the service was more rapid than in the case of men of longer standing and more eminent service. He had known cases of excellent consuls who had devoted themselves with great zeal to the duties of their office, but who had failed to receive that recognition to which they were justly entitled.

The other complaint was with regard to the necessity for special knowledge commercially amongst the consuls. Sometimes commercial men made inordinate demands upon the consuls, and they thought they ought to do nothing else but push British goods and offer unlimited hospitality to British merchants. Considering the kind of position they must occupy and the dignity which belonged to consuls as representing the Crown, it was plain that they could not expect them to devote the whole of their time to merely commercial duties. At the same time it was quite true that a great deal might be done which in times past had not been done to give the latest and the most up-to-date commercial intelligence which a man with commercial experience who knew the ropes was best able to give. Therefore, he agreed that something more ought to be done than heretofore had been done. If this work was to be done properly one of two things must happen: either they must be very carefully selected from the commercial community, or else there must be something like a prescribed course of knowledge for the consular office for which a period of commercial training must be prescribed in order to qualify persons for these appointments. The Committee say—

> "In our opinion the general consular service, as it at present exists, offers no attraction to capable young men. It is not a properly constituted or graded public service, and offers no definite prospect of promotion to those who enter it, for men who are new to the service may be given appointments over the heads of others who have been there for years before them."

I think that presents in a summary form their condemnation of the existing system. What, therefore, was it that was wanted to create a proper consular service? In the first place it should be a regular service and an open service. It should be also recognised as a distinct branch of the public service, with its own rules, and it ought to be an open service in this sense, that there ought to be competition to secure the proper capacity and special knowledge of those who entered the service. The Committee recommended limited competition, and also that the service ought to be one in which both promotion and entrance should be by merit. He would not say that promotion ought to be always according to seniority, because while seniority ought to be regarded there ought to be a power of advancing a capable man where he had given exceptional proof of his capacity. There ought to be some proof of competence and some evidence that those appointed had the necessary capacity needed for the particular country to which they were going to be sent. Although in nineteen out of twenty cases the principal duties were commercial, they were not always commercial duties to the same extent, for at some consulates there were political duties as well. The recommendations of the Committee went a long way to meet the difficulties complained of and would carry out the amendments required. The recommendations of the Committee were—

> "That the present system of nomination and age limits for the general consular service should be abolished; that admission into that service should be by limited competition; and that the age for admission should be from 22 to 27. These limits will enable candidates to compete who have had both a university and a commercial training. At the same time, power should be reserved to the Secretary of State to appoint any person, regardless of age limit, to one of the higher posts for which special qualifications may be required; but such appointments should be rare, as in the diplomatic service, and should only be made in exceptional circumstances, and when they are clearly in the public interest, so as to avoid lessening the attractions of the service, and blocking the promotion of deserving officers."

That was a recommendation which he thought would generally commend itself to the Committee. Where the ordinary rules were passed over under the power reserved to the Secretary of State to appoint a person regardless of age limit, a memorandum or some other official note should be made of the fact, which could, if necessary, be reported to Parliament, regarding the special services and stating the grounds on which the appointment had been made. He thought that would prevent any abuse of the power. The Committee went on to discuss the way in which this should be secured. They state:—

> "In view of this fact, the Committee consider that the interests of British trade abroad would be advanced if consuls had a business training which would qualify them to forward and safeguard, and, at the same time, incline them to sympathise with the interests of British merchants. Consular officers must, indeed, have the qualifications necessary to enable them to discharge efficiently their other consular duties, but the Committee believe the latter qualifications to be in no way incompatible with the former. On the contrary, they think that a business training of a few years will be of material assistance to these officers in performing their duties generally. The Committee suggest that great advantage would result if young men trained in commercial houses for four or five years could be induced to enter the consular service."

Those were valuable suggestions, which showed that the Committee recognised the wishes of the commercial community. He saw, however, a difficulty in giving effect to the proposal for four or five years' training in commercial houses, because it was clear that those who entered in an ordinary way might not in the course of four or five years, or at the age the Committee specified, have got to a sufficiently high position in that particular house to be able to acquire the kind of knowledge of commerce which a consul ought to possess. He thought that point required some little further consideration. They wanted men not only familiar with the ordinary routine of commercial business, but they should be in a position in commercial houses to obtain experience of the larger questions of commerce, and the theory of commercial operations, and they should have a pretty wide experience of the way foreign business was done. A mere experience in a commercial house extending over four or five years would not give the practical knowledge which the Committee desired. The Committee recommended also—

> "That a proportion of the nominations for the suggested limited competition should be given to young men who have received a good commercial training. The applicants should be

required to satisfy the Secretary of State before they receive nominations that they have had a liberal education: that they have had a commercial training of four or five years, and that they are in other respects from their previous history likely to be qualified and suitable for the consular service."

The Committee proceeded to discuss the subjects of examination and the important question of salaries. He noticed that the salaries showed a slight increase on the total expense, but that was not a matter which need deter the House from adopting the recommendations of the Commission. Although one was loth in these days to make any suggestions except in the interests of economy, he thought they might, with great advantage, increase the number of their consuls. It had been a great advantage in the case of the appointment of the new commercial *attachés*, whose range of operations were wider than the commercial consuls, who travelled about through the countries, and were able to present reports upon the commercial conditions of the country, which were of more use to commercial men at home than a report from any particular place. He believed that the result would amply justify the expense, and he thought they might with advantage appoint more consuls in places where they had none at present. The Committee recommended that the system of obtaining unpaid consuls in many large cities should be maintained. Those who disparaged unpaid consuls did not know what was the alternative. If they had paid consuls in all these places they would add very greatly to the cost the country would be put to. If they had no unpaid consuls they would lose the services of a number of capable men who possessed knowledge of the commercial conditions of the country, and who were able to give valuable information. Therefore, he believed that where considerations of economy made it impossible to establish paid consuls they ought to endeavour to find competent men and retain the unpaid consuls. He had touched only the outlines of this subject, but he hoped the recommendations of the Committee would induce the Foreign Office to take some action in regard to this Report. He asked the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he might entertain the hope that the Foreign Office, recognising the importance of the subject, would deal with the matter promptly and in accordance with the suggestions the Committee had made.

SIR ALBERT ROLLIT (Islington, S.) said he thought the Committee generally would concur in the remarks made by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Aberdeen. He did not remember whether the right hon. Gentleman was at the Foreign Office during Lord Rosebery's administration, but he thought credit should be given to Lord Rosebery for the revised consular instructions drawn up at that time, which had been a great improvement, and had contributed very much to the more efficient administration of the consular service. It would be greatly to the commercial advantage of the country if more adequate remuneration were given to the consuls, and if their numbers were increased. He did not think there was any Vote in the Estimates which demanded more careful consideration than this one. There was a general decrease in the Vote, but there were some increases, of which he did not complain. There was an increase of £3,000 in the salaries, and he thought that whatever might be said about salaries generally, and the opportunity of getting with advantage unpaid services, in many cases the remuneration of their consuls was absolutely inadequate, and this did not contribute to the proper performance of the very responsible duties committed to a consul.

He hoped that this decrease did not mean a decrease in their mobility. On the contrary, we should encourage inquiries in the surrounding districts. He found also that there was a decrease for special missions and services of so large an amount as £9,000. These special missions, services and reports were what we wanted most, in view of what was being done by other nations. He hoped the decrease did not mean any starving of that branch in the future, and yet he was inclined to think that it might be so. He did not hesitate for a moment to say that our trade as a general rule in those districts was decreasing, and he thought that it was simply worthy of more attention than it had received. At this moment he was informed, on the best authority, that a treaty of commerce was being negotiated between Germany and

Roumania. A similar treaty was negotiated a few years ago with Russia, and since then undoubtedly our trade had been materially affected. He was informed that at present there were really no adequate means at Bucharest for the purpose of looking into these matters, and, what was still more singular, Roumania was outside the sphere of any of our commercial attachés, so that if his information, which came from a London Chamber of Commerce, were correct, we were isolated. Special attention should be given to the negotiations proceeding with Germany. He hoped the Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs would be able to give the Committee some assurance that that was being done. He expressed the hope that the noble Lord would take steps to have a special commissioner despatched in order that our commercial relations with Roumania should have the closest and most watchful attention. The right hon. Gentleman had referred to the system of appointments by patronage. That system was by no means over. He admitted that there had been considerable improvement, but the noble Lord acknowledged that colonels and others who had done good service in different parts of the Empire were recognised by consular appointments. No one objected to the recognition of their services, but he objected to their being recognised and the men remunerated at the cost of commerce. That was a most expensive mode of dealing with the subject.

The right hon. Gentleman also spoke on the question of open competition in the Far East. He hoped that principle would be acted upon. He was sure everybody would re-echo what was said by the right hon. Gentleman, namely, that many of our consuls rendered most able services to the country. There was, however, considerable difference in the ability which they displayed. A number of the reports simply comprised statistics which had been well known for a long period. Such reports were still far too plentiful. Why were the reports so late? He admitted that they were improving, but they came in batches, and he thought the delay must be at home. This was the day when in commerce despatch was everything, and nothing was less acceptable than information which had already been obtained. He hoped that in future we should have, as in America, more special reports dealing with specific subjects rather than reports containing statistical information generally. The Departmental Committee which had been referred to, had taken no small pains to ascertain the facts and arrive at the right conclusions. While he thought the report by no means dealt fully with the subject and that it touched merely its fringe, there was in it a great deal of material which might be useful, and which he hoped would be applied as early as possible.

In regard to commercial training the difficulty was to get it in this country. He did not under-rate for a moment the old classical instruction and the opportunities which now existed at the Universities for obtaining a greater knowledge of science than in times past. It was not long since a don at Oxford said—"We know nothing of science here, and we do not even teach it." An improvement had taken place, but the difficulty was to know where a candidate for a consular appointment could obtain a good commercial training, so far as this country was concerned, such as could be obtained in the commercial colleges in Paris and other places. Although improvements had been introduced in the teaching of scientific engineering in connection with our colleges, even in this department we did not make any approach to what was done in other countries and in our own colony of Canada. The suggestion had been made that candidates for consular appointments should spend some time in commercial offices. He thought that would be particularly ineffective. He was very much afraid that if special ability calculated to fit a candidate for consular service were exhibited, he would discover, and his employers would discover, that a much more adequate remuneration was obtainable in those offices than in the consular service. The result would be that the second and third-rate men, instead of the very best men, would enter the service. There were certain large houses which had more or less a monopoly, who were disposed to use their own organisations for obtaining information, but in dealing with commercial matters the Government must consider the whole community, and he was quite satisfied that it was even dangerous that knowledge of the affairs of foreign countries should be in the hands of only a few houses. They should spread the information and give more opportunity to the smaller houses to take their rank among the better and higher. There was no doubt that we were behind in the matter of commercial training and languages. It was quite true that English was becoming more and more the commercial language of the world, but the want of foreign languages was a great obstacle to our trade. He thought the words "preferably French and German" were not justified. He should have been more disposed to recommend French or German, and Italian, Spanish, and Portuguese. He also urged the desirability of more attention being given to the metric system of arithmetic. The greatest impetus to consular work being well done would be given by allowing our consuls a better opportunity of rising into the diplomatic service, and by making that service more commercial in character than it had been in the past.

MR. PARTINGTON (Derbyshire, High Peak) asked whether any of the £2,500 which was spent in collecting commercial intelligence was expended in obtaining information on the fiscal reform. The system of appointing commercial attachés should be reformed. Although a great deal was said about foreign competition and the loss of foreign markets to us, the system of appointing these attachés remained a farce. One of our commercial attachés had to look after France, Belgium and Switzerland. He was also secretary to an embassy, and a director of the Suez Canal. Another represented Germany, Denmark, Holland, Norway and Sweden, and although they had one for Turkey, there was no commercial attaché for either the United States or Russia. They had five commercial agents over the whole world—one of them at Moscow, another in Central America, and another at Vladivostock. The population of the last mentioned place was only about 22,000, and the imports were chiefly for the Russian military and the Manchurian railways. What was the good of having a commercial attaché in that part of the world? What commercial training had these attachés? If this country desired to hold its own against foreign competition it should pay attention to these questions.

Sir HOWARD VINCENT (Sheffield, Central) said that they were greatly indebted to Lord Lansdowne for appointing a Committee on the consular service, and he hoped that the Government would see their way to adopt that Committee's very excellent report at a very early period. The attractions for entering the consular service were not excessive, and might have to be increased. In regard to the large number of foreigners who held consular posts under His Majesty's Government, he knew that many of them showed great zeal in the service, but undoubtedly, where it was possible, British subjects should always be appointed. He endorsed what had been said by the hon. Member for Islington as to the great deficiencies in the system of commercial education in this country. A great necessity existed for commercial colleges, and he had always thought that the Imperial Institute should have been changed into something of the sort. If anything in that direction could be done under the auspices of the Government he was sure it would be money well expended and cheerfully voted by every representative of a commercial constituency in the House.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.) said he desired to ask the noble Lord the Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs, whether he could give him some information as to the retirement from the consular service of Mr. Joseph H. Longford, formerly consul at Nagasaki, Japan. This gentleman, he thought, had been treated with very great injustice in view of his long service in the consular work of the Empire. Mr. Longford had been vice-consul at Tokio, then he was transferred to Formosa, and afterwards was appointed to Nagasaki. After thirty-two years' continuous service he was advised by his medical attendant that if he were to retain his health it was absolutely necessary to have a change of climate. Mr. Longford returned to England on leave some time ago, and was given to understand that, in view of the state of his health and the advice of his medical man, he would be transferred to a consular post in the United States or some other portion of the world where the climate would suit him. It was said that Lord Salisbury himself held out very strong hopes to Mr. Longford that he would receive a consular post in Boston, or elsewhere, when a vacancy occurred However, in spite of his 32 years' distinguished and laborious service in the Far East, he was suddenly ordered to return to Nagasaki, or leave the service. He had a number of extracts from *The Times* and other leading journals, spread over a long series of years, speaking in high praise with reference to the work performed by Mr. Longford. He had also a number of expressions of opinion from leading statesmen connected with foreign and colonial affairs, setting forth that Mr. Longford had performed his duties with the greatest possible effectiveness, and with great advantage to his country. For instance, *The Times* of May 19th, 1896, referring to one of Mr. Longford's reports, said it was a model of what such a document ought to be. Not a single complaint had ever been made against this gentleman. He was greatly afraid that some influences of not quite a fair nature had been at work in reference to Mr. Longford. In the first place he was an Irishman, and there were those who said that hadsomething to do with the fact that he had been harshly treated. He had an account of a conversation which took place between the Secretary of Legation and a very distinguished American gentleman, the President of the University of South Dakota. In the course of that conversation it was stated that Mr. Longford wa snot an old man; that he entered the service as a student interpreter at the age of 19; that he had served for 32 years faithfully, honourably, and usefully, and that then he was suddenly retired without any option, except to return to Nagasaki. The Secretary of the Legation at Tokio said to the professor—"How can he hope to rise in the service when he is not a patriotic Englishman?" Now they could not all be patriotic Englishmen; they could not all come from Birmingham. This Secretary of Legation said of Mr. Longford that he was a Home Ruler, and that no Home Ruler could be a patriotic Englishman. It was under these circumstances that Mr. Longford was retired. He presumed that Mr. Longford enjoyed a pension after his 32 years service; but it was not a question of pension, but a question of a grievous wrong being done to a distinguished servant. He asked the noble Lord to look into this case, and see if anything could be done to lessen the harshness of the treatment Mr. Longford had received. All that could be said against him was that he was an Irishman, and a Home Ruler. The best servants in the diplomatic service had been Irishmen, and the next thing they might be told would be that no man could get on in the service unless he cursed the memory of Cobden, and became a rampant protectionist.

The men who ought to be appointed as consuls were men of a commercial training, suited by their lives and their experience to look after the commercial interests of Great Britain in all the regions of the earth. But many of the gentlemen appointed as consuls were palpably so appointed, not because they had experience or knew anything of business, but for no earthly reason except that they had simply been party hacks, had sat in this House, or had friends in the Government. They simply wanted a job with a good salary to it. Some of the consular reports made wonderful and extraordinary reading, and conveyed no other impression than that the men who wrote them were not fitted to represent this country in any part of the world. In order to show the kind of gentlemen who were appointed, and their qualifications for the office of consul, he would give two or three instances. He wished it to be distinctly understood that he was making no personal attack on these gentlemen; he had no personal animosity against them; he did not blame them for taking good appointments when they were offered. All he desired to call attention to was their lack of commercial training and general qualifications for the office. He would not therefore mention names. One gentleman was a clerk in the Foreign Office from 1857 to 1894, and his age was 54—a somewhat advanced stage in life at which to commence an entirely novel career. He had doubtless been passed over in promotion in his own department, the time of his retirement was approaching, and he was appointed Consul-General at Valparaiso. A man who had spent his life in the Foreign Office was not the man to be sent to a place like Valparaiso to watch over the commercial interests of this country. Another gentleman was chief clerk in the Treaty Department of the Foreign Office from 1856 to 1896. His duties had consisted of the keeping and examination of accounts, and matters connected with treaties, ceremonial, and passports; he had had no opportunity of acquiring any knowledge of trade and shipping, and yet he was appointed Consul-General at Havre, and afterwards at Antwerp. Another gentleman was in the diplomatic service from 1875 to 1895, and was then appointed Consul-General at Chicago, and afterwards at New Orleans, although he had absolutely no knowledge of American life, commerce, or business. Another gentleman was a knight. This time he would mention the name, as surely no knight would mind his name being given. Sir T. Smith was for many years a prominent working official of the Primrose League; he worked hard in that department, enrolling knights and dames, inaugurating habitations, unfurling flags, marching to the Albert Hall, and doing all the other things which a good Primrose Leaguer must do or perish. All his qualifications for looking after the trade and commerce of the Empire were acquired in the habitations of the Primrose League, and he was rewarded by Lord Salisbury offering him the appointment of Consul at Samoa, and afterwards at Valparaiso. Another gentleman, Captain Talbot, was in the Army; he served in the hussars from 1860 to 1865; there was no further record of his military service, but in 1885 he was appointed Consul-General at Tahiti, then at Corunna, and finally at Boston, one of the best and most important posts in the service. A few years in a hussar regiment was surely not sufficient recommendation or training for a man who had to meet the 'cute Yankee people of Boston. The last one he would mention was the former hon. Member for Rye. Colonel Brookfield was very popular on his own side. He went to the war in South Africa, thereby setting a good example from his own point of view, and he wrote novels. ["His brother."] If hon. Members opposite objected to the statement that Colonel Brookfield wrote novels, he would withdraw the expression, and say that he betrayed literary leanings. He was not to be condemned on that account, as the Prime Minister had done the same, but these were not the qualifications necessary for the office of consul at Montevideo, to which Colonel Brookfield was appointed.

*MR. PIERPOINT (Warrington) said there was nothing derogatory in the assertion that Colonel Brookfield wrote a novel, but the hon. Member implied a sneer as to his capabilities to act as Consul at Montevideo, an office to which he was never appointed.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND said the appointment was certainly offered to Colonel Brookfield, but, of course, if the hon. Member assured him that the offer was not accepted that part of his case fell to the ground. He believed, however, that what he had stated was substantially correct.

*MR. PIERPOINT said he believed there was some formal appointment; that he was not going to Montevideo he knew to be a fact.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND said that in that case what the Committee would want to know from the noble Lord was whether we had a consul at Montevideo at all. Anxious as he was that our consuls should be men of business capacity, he would rather have a Volunteer officer, or even a novelist, than no one at all. He would suggest that some other method of rewarding long services in Parliament or Government offices should be invented than the appointment to consular posts. For instance, substantial salaries might be attached to the various Orders which were so much sought after, and then these might be bestowed on deserving individuals. He had no hope, however, of his advice being accepted; it never was, and the British Empire consequently suffered.

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (LORD CRANBORNE, Rochester) said the hon. Gentleman had brought before the House in a humorous vein a complaint which he had heard very often before, and he thought he ought to make one or two criticisms on his methods. It was not usual, of course, to mention the names of gentlemen belonging to the consular service, and to criticise them unless they had done something worthy of blame.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND said he never blamed the gentlemen he had referred to for a single moment. He said no more than that their training did not fit them to be consuls.

LORD CRANBORNE said that if the hon. Gentleman had found anything worthy of blame he would have been absolutely within his right in bringing it forward. He could not, however, agree with the hon. Gentleman that the position of a Member of the House, or long service in the Foreign Office, necessarily proved that a man was unfit to be a consul; but he might be relieved from defending in detail the system which existed at present, because he had been a party to drawing up a document which had been laid before Parliament, and which proposed a radical change in the method under which consuls were to be appointed. The hon. Gentleman referred to the case of Consul Longford, but the hon. Gentleman candidly admitted that he had not given him any notice on that subject, and, therefore, he was not prepared to answer him, but he would, of course, look into the matter, and if the hon. Gentleman put a Question down he would be glad to reply to it.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND asked if the noble Lord would be good enough to elucidate the mystery which surrounded Montevideo.

LORD CRANBORNE said that the hon. Gentleman need be under no misapprehension that this country would not be properly represented at Montevideo. [HON. MEMBERS: Are we represented ?]

LORD CRANBORNE: I am not absolutely certain whether we are at the present moment. I believe my hon. friend behind me is perfectly accurate in saying that Colonel Brookfield is not consul at Montevideo, but he is about to be consul somewhere else.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: Send me out, and I will bring back word who is there.

LORD CRANBORNE: I should be sorry to remove the hon. Member from the House of which he is such an ornament.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND: You had me in gaol for three months.

LORD CRANBORNE said the hon. Gentleman the Member for South Islington delivered an interesting speech on the consular service, and he asked what the Foreign Office was doing to secure British interests in connection with the Roumanian tariff. That was a matter which was engaging the careful attention of the Government. They were fortunate to have at that moment in London His Majesty's Minister to Roumania, whose advice they would have the advantage of, and they would take every step in their power to arrive at a proper conclusion in the matter. He was not able at the moment to give an absolute promise that a special representative of our commercial interests would be sent to Bucharest, but the subject was engaging the serious attention of the Government. It was a little too soon for the right hon. Gentleman the Member for South Aberdeen to expect him to give a definite reply to the Question whether the Government were going to carry out the recommendations of a report which had only been laid before Parliament at the beginning of the present month, especially in view of the fact that the report entered into considerable detail which required to be considered by the Foreign Office. He himself occupied a somewhat ambiguous position as one of the joint authors of the report and also as the representative of the Foreign Office, and he could not be expected to be sufficiently disinterested to criticise a report which he himself had signed. He thought, however, he might be allowed to so far depart from his official position as to say that he hoped the report would be accepted by the Foreign Office, and he had every confidence that, in a large measure, it would be.

Having regard to the criticisms of the consular service, it ought to be noted that the report said the country had been well served on the whole, and that there was a great deal of good in the present system. It was quite recognised by the Committee, however, that the time had come for a change, and that it was necessary to place the service on a more businesslike and more formal footing. He did not think that the reason the consular service did not attract as good men as it ought was the pay. The pay was not so very bad; but what undoubtedly did act as a deterrent was that the service did not offer any certainty of a career. A man might enter the service, and might be successful in rising in it; but again he might not; and no able young man, choosing his career for life, would embark on one in which the prospects were so uncertain as the Committee found them to be. The first thing, then, was to place the service on a regular footing, and to determine the limits of age between which consuls should be appointed, and also to determine the kind of examination they would have to pass, and the commercial training they should possess. As regarded age, it was necessary that the candidates should be young, because unless they had young men they would not get the best men. If old men were to be appointed, they would be generally men who had tried something else, and had probably failed. In order to get a service which would really deserve the confidence of Parliament they would have to take young men, and afford them an opportunity of adopting the consular service as their profession for life. As to the examination, the committee recommended that it should be competitive. There was a great deal to be said on both sides, but it was very difficult to find a substitute for a competitive examination. After very carefully considering the matter the Committee came to the conclusion that it was necessary that the element of competition should enter into the appointment; but they were unanimously opposed to open competition; and he thought the hon. Members would probably agree that they were wise in coming to that decision. In the first place, they had the precedent of the diplomatic service. In the second place, he thought when men were to be chosen to represent their country in more or less important positions abroad, that every man would not necessarily be suited for the position. It had been said, very truly, that they ought to have British subjects as consuls. He agreed. But even in the wide compass of that term "British subject," he thought there would be found certain persons who were not suited to be consular representatives. That was the reason why limited competition was adopted; and the Committee would agree that it would be easy to give other reasons why open competition should not be adopted. The question of compulsory languages had been referred to. It was agreed on all hands that French should be the first; and he confessed he was surprised that all the expert witnesses recommended German as the second. It was pointed out that Spanish was very easily acquired by anyone who had been properly educated, and especially by anyone who knew French; and that, therefore, it was not nearly so important at the beginning to know Spanish as it was to know German. Therefore German was chosen as the second language. But the most important point was the question of the commercial training of the candidates. The Committee recommended two methods—one that the candidates should have had a business experience, and the other that after their appointment they should spend some time in the Commercial Department of the Board of Trade. These recommendations had been criticised as inadequate. It was said that the candidates should acquire this qualification in commercial colleges. But the answer to that suggestion was that there were no such colleges of the kind suggested, and, therefore, the proposal was impossible. It might be asked why they did not recommend their establishment; but that would be an undue extension of their duties. They were not asked to consider the interesting and important topic of commercial education in this country. Least of all were they asked to make proposals which would throw a very heavy burden on the Treasury. So they had to take things as they found them, and they proposed the two methods he had mentioned. The right hon. Gentleman the member for South Aberdeen indicated a considerable amount of doubt as to whether they would be able to secure good candidates from business houses.

MR. BRYCE said he did not quite mean that. What he meant was that the mere fact that a man was five years in a business house did not prove that he had received the kind of commercial training that was wanted.

LORD CRANBORNE said he agreed that such a candidate might not have the commercial training that was wanted; but he would have acquired a knowledge of business, from a practical point of view, which he believed was to be acquired in no other way. The Committee felt strongly that the only way of obtaining candidates with a practical knowledge of business matters was to take men who had actually been at business. The Committee recognised that it was as important, and even more important, than any other information that a consul should possess, that he should be able to deal with commercial matters, furnish commercial information, and act as a channel for commercial intelligence. The financial conditions which were proposed really meant that the consular service provided a decent career for a young man. It was proposed to start at £300 a year, with a possible rise to £1,200, which was not bad, provided, of course, that the consul would be assured that he would stand an equal chance upon his merits with others in the consular service, and that, without fear or favour, he might aspire to win the prizes of his profession. Lastly, he would say, that he hoped the Committee would realise that the proposal to take men from business houses was avowedly put forward as an experiment. That experiment would show whether such a system would be successful, and would command the confidence of British subjects who had businesses abroad. An hon. Gentleman criticised the unpunctuality with which consular reports were furnished. He was sorry if there was any ground for legitimate criticism in that direction, and he would look into the matter. But he should like to remind the Committee that, as a matter of fact, a consul had to depend for his information on the official sources of the country in which he was posted; and that very often the delay was not his delay, but the delay of others in furnishing facts and figures necessary for his report. Of course they could not too roughly disturb the existing system, because there were certain vested interests which must be respected. In this matter he spoke more as a member of the Committee than as the representative of the Foreign Office. He could not enter into any engagement on the part of the Department to adopt all the recommendations of the Committee; there had not yet been time for doing that; but he was certain the Foreign Secretary would have every desire to follow the recommendations so far as he could, especially if they received on the whole the approval of the House of Commons.

MR. MOON (St. Pancras, N.) said he wished to direct attention to what appeared to him to be a mistaken policy in one section of the consular service, namely, the Far Eastern branch.

And, it being Midnight, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Committee report Progress; to sit again upon Monday next.

REVENUE BILL.

[SECOND READING.]

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

MR. DALZIEL (Kirkcaldy Burghs) desired to renew his protest against matters of such great importance being taken after midnight. This Bill raised questions of great and far-reaching importance, which ought to be discussed in the light of day, and it was not right that the Government should attempt to get it through without a word of explanation. The object of the first clause appeared to be to exempt imported molasses from duty. That in itself was an excellent proposal, but it was in strange contrast with the measure discussed yesterday, and the Government ought to explain why they proposed to tax sugar one day and to remit the tax on another class of sugar the next. The Bill also proposed to tax the spirit contained in manufactured articles. It would surely be very difficult to ascertain the exact proportion of spirit contained in the manufactured article, but no explanation of how it was proposed to be done had been given. With the work they already had in hand, and the additional duties to be imposed upon them, the life of the Customs officials would be anything but a happy one. There was also an allowance to be made on articles exported containing spirit. How was that to be tested, and who was to decide to whom the allowance should be paid? Then, too, saccharine "and all like substances" were in future to be taxed. Who was to define what "all like substances" were? Had this clause been inserted at the request of the Colonial Secretary? In future the Inland Revenue authorities were to have power to inspect warehouses in which spirit might happen to be. He would have thought they already had full powers to inspect such warehouses, and that there was no necessity for such a clause.

The Bill also announced another new departure. In the case of a company increasing its capital, the increased registration duty was to be paid within fifteen days. If it was not paid there was to be a debt charge on the shareholders as individuals. The law of limited liability was to be set aside, and a shareholder holding a £1 share in a company might, although that company had been wound up, be liable for a debt to the Chancellor of the Exchequer in regard to an increase of capital. That was an important departure, because in future the liability of a shareholder would not be limited by the amount of the shares held by him. He protested against adding any additional responsibility to a shareholder when he had discharged his full liability by paying the amount of the share at the nominal value. There was a possibility that the Chancellor of the Exchequer with regard to all these stamps might be making a mistake. His belief was that the severe tax put upon registration had been a source of very great loss to the Revenue, and he thought this cause was driving many registrations out of the country. His opinion was that this proposal would not recompense the right hon. Gentleman, and would not amount to the sum which would justify this important departure. Then, again, hiring agreements were to be taxed, and this was a question which deserved the serious consideration of Parliament. If a person entered into a hiring agreement for £100 and paid £80 of that amount, and could not pay the remaining £20, it was very hard that such a person should lose the money he had paid. He should like to know what evidence could be brought forward to justify this important departure. Had the right hon. Gentleman formed any estimate as to the amount of money he would get by this proposal? Then there was a proposal in regard to the insurance of ships. In future under this Bill it would be impossible to get sea insurance on any ship under construction in a dockyard or port. Then there was another proposal in regard to friendly societies, and smaller policies had to be reported as well as the larger ones. He did not wish to go into the other one hundred and one things raised by this Bill, but he contended that this was a measure which ought not to be discussed after 12 o'clock. Many of the proposals in the Bill were of an important character, and as they had had no explanation of them, he thought they were entitled to insist upon knowing exactly what they were doing and what object the Government had in view. He could not believe that the Government at this period would introduce a Bill which would go as far as this Bill went. Until they got an explanation he was not inclined to believe that all the clauses were as good as the Secretary to the Treasury believed them to be. He hoped the hon. Member would justify his policy in bringing forward this Bill at this period of the session. He begged to move "That this Bill be read a second time this day three months."

*SIR CHARLES DILKE said the main objection to this Bill was that the whole of these proposals should have been in the Finance Bill. That Bill was not confined only to the new taxes of the year, but it was a measure which always contained the general amendments of the law. Therefore he had the greatest pleasure in seconding this Motion. There were two rather strange clauses in this Bill, and one of them related to the importation of molasses. It would be a very difficult thing to distinguish molasses imported for one purpose and those imported for another purpose. Molasses was used both for feeding stuffs and as food for young persons, therefore it would be very difficult to make this distinction. A more serious matter was concerned in Clause 13, which was the tenement clause. He did not wish to accuse the Chancellor of the Exchequer of specially differentiating in the case of Birmingham, but it was well known that in Birmingham there were no flats. The effect of this proposal must be to benefit by a preferential system one particular class of houses.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day three months.'"—(*Mr. Dalziel.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question.'"

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. ELLIOT, Durham) said the hon. Member for Kirkcaldy Burghs complained that no explanation had been given of this Bill. As a matter of fact he was prepared to rise to give an explanation when the hon. Member anticipated him. The hon. Member appeared to altogether misconceive the nature of the Bill. He asked more than once what the Chancellor of the Exchequer hoped to gain by it. The object of the Bill was not to gain money for the Chancellor of the Exchequer but to relieve the public of a burden. [AN HON. MEMBER: To relieve the landlords.] There was nothing in the Bill to relieve the landlords. It was partly to relieve those engaged in the agricultural interest who were anxious, for the purposes of their business, to bring in feeding stuffs. It was to enable them to carry on their trade to advantage, and to free from duty articles which came into this country practically as raw material. He did not know what there was in the clause to affect landlords or to enable the hon. Member to ask what the Chancellor of the Exchequer hoped to gain by the Bill. In regard to the taxing clause anyone who read it would understand that it was to carry out a promise given on the Second Reading of the Budget Bill by the Chancellor of the Exchequer that he hoped to be able to give effect to his wishes in relieving from duties commodities which were made use of in the way stated. That was a main and most important clause of this Bill. The other clauses were framed in order to smooth matters and lighten the burden on the ordinary taxpayer of the country. He did not know that the hon. Member quite appreciated the real meaning of the spirits clause. The real meaning could be put easily and shortly. The position at present was that where articles had been manufactured by means of spirits the manufactured articles on being imported should be subject to duty. At present the duty was estimated by the Customs, who took into consideration how much spirits would be required in the manufacture of a particular article and then impose on the manufactured article a duty equal to what would have been on the spirits if imported into this country not as a manufactured article. What was done by this clause was to put the scale of charge exactly at the same rate as on the home-made manufactured article. The hon. Gentleman seemed to think that a considerable point was made as to saccharine. At present the Act of Parliament governing these matters gave the authorities power to prohibit the importation of saccharine, while in regard to glucose there was power given not really to prohibit but to regulate the manufacture of the article in this country. When the last Act was passed no saccharine was manufactured in this country, but nowadays it was. It was a highly sweetening matter, and might easily be made the subject of fraud, and it was proposed that the conditions applicable to glucose should be extended to saccharine. At present the law required that the housing for excise officers should be established on the premises where the distilleries were situated, but it gave no power to establish these houses beyond the actual premises used for distilling. The clause to which the hon. Member had called attention would enable premises to be extended beyond the present limit. With regard to stamps, as hon Members were aware, the amount at present was 5s. per £100 on the capital of companies. There was the same stamp duty exacted for an increase of capital. No limit was fixed as to the time for the payment of duty on increased capital, and therefore a good deal of capital escaped taxation. A clause was therefore put into the Bill to prevent evasions of the law in that respect. Then as regarded coal, when a cargo of coal was shipped, either for foreign parts or coastwise, the exporter had to enter into a bond of security for the payment of the coal duty. The bond was subject to a stamp duty, and the proposal in the Bill was to relieve the coal exporter from that stamp duty. If hon. Members were determined to stand in the way of these concessions being given they would cause inconvenience and loss to many of His Majesty's subjects.

MR. LOUGH (Islington, S.): What about the Inhabited House Duties?

MR. ELLIOT said that so far as he understood it, the object of that clause was to make some abatement; to charge exactly the same duty on houses erected one above the other as applied to houses set side by side. That did not impose a burden, but was a relief.

MR. CALDWELL (Lanarkshire, Mid) said that in view of the importance of the subject he moved the adjournment of the debate.

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. RITCHIE, Croydon) said it was perfectly obvious that the Government could not insist on this Bill being proceeded with if there was not a desire on the part of the House to assist the Government in doing what they believed to be in the interests of the public. Many of the matters which were dealt with in the Bill had been pressed on the Exchequer for several years past, and they were all in the nature of concessions. It was evident that the Bill gave facilities for a vast amount of discussion, and he was prepared to agree to the Motion for the postponement of the debate. As the Bill was composed of a great many clauses which, on the face of them, were, perhaps, not easily understood, he thought it might facilitate matters if a memorandum were circulated amongst hon. Members explanatory of each one of the proposals. He hoped that the House would consent, after considering the memorandum for a night or two, to the Government proceeding with the Bill, which was very much wanted so far as administration was concerned.

MR. LOUGH said he wished to thank the right hon. Gentleman for so readily accepting the Motion. He had to say, however, that if the memorandum was not full and complete there was not the slightest hope of the Bill passing, except under the compulsion of the closure.

MR. ALEXANDER CROSS (Glasgow, Camlachie) said he was gratified at the very reasonable manner in which they had been met by the Chancellor of the Exchequer; and he did not think that the debate should be allowed to conclude without his right hon. friend being congratulated on his action.

MR. MACVEAGH (Down, S.) said he hoped that the right hon. Gentleman would be able to distinguish between molasses imported for food for stock and molasses imported for a different purpose, namely, for the manufacture of a very poisonous class of Scotch whisky. It would be desirable that the House should be given an assurance that this Bill would not facilitate Scotch distillers poisoning the public.

Motion made, and Question—"That the debate be now adjourned,"—(*Mr Caldwell.*)

Put, and agreed to.

Debate to be resumed upon Tuesday next.

PUBLIC WORKS LOANS BILL.

[SECOND READING.]

Order for Second Reading read.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

MR. LOUGH said he thought some explanation of the Bill ought to be given. He wished to know why one amount was taken for Great Britain and another amount taken for Ireland. He thought the Government would really facilitate matters if an explanation were given.

MR. ELLIOT said the Bill was an annual one, and was framed in the usual way. The main reason for wiping out such a large sum for Seton Harbour was that until it was wiped out the Harbour Commissioners would be unable to raise money to improve the Harbour, and, in the circumstances, he thought it was only right in the interests of the fishing population of the neighbourhood that the amount should be wiped off.

MR. WHITLEY said that although the Bill was called a Public Works Loans

Bill, it was really a Bill for wiping off debts. For instance, Timothy Sullivan was to have £8 1s. 10d. written off; John Houlihan was to have £5 5s. written off; and George Bain and James Webster were to have £10 7s. 1d. written off. He confessed he was not familiar with this sort of Bill. He always understood that such a Bill was to enable money to be advanced to certain local authorities for public works; but when they were asked to authorise the Treasury to issue a sum not exceeding £7,000,000 in Great Britain and £900,000 in Ireland, he thought they were entitled to look into the matter closely. After all £7,900,000 added to the liability of the State was a matter for consideration. He wished to know how it came about that the small debts mentioned in the schedule were to be written off. Certainly, if the money now asked for was to be distributed in the same manner he would decline to vote for the Bill.

MR. DALZIEL said that when he looked at the Bill he thought it suggested a job of some kind; and he made sure it was an Irish Bill. He made enquiries, however, and found it related to that part of the country to which he himself belonged. They were asked to wipe off £5,509 borrowed by the Port Seton Harbour Commissioners. What security was that amount granted on? Who granted it, and who was responsible for the great loss which was incurred? If they were going to lend £7,000 one year and wipe off £5,000 later, there would be a great demand for loans on the Treasury. He thought until there was an explanation that the House should not give increased powers in regard to loans. As regarded the smaller sums, the individual cases might be justified; but it seemed to him that the amount to be remitted in the interests of the Port Seton Harbour Commissioners was a very important matter indeed. He thought the House was entitled to more information than it had received; and unless it was forthcoming he would vote against the Second Reading.

MR. JOHN DEWAR (Inverness) said the amounts which it was proposed to write off in connection with the loans granted to Scottish fishermen were not in any way due to the dishonesty of the fishermen, but to the mismanagement of the Scottish Fishery Board. The Board advanced money to build boats, but the boats were the wrong class; and the fishermen were consequently unable to pay the loans. How differently things were managed in Ireland, where the Congested Districts Board had established a great fishing industry and where the fishermen were able to repay the money which had been advanced to them.

MR. CALDWELL said that it should be noted that the sums asked for in the present Bill showed an increase over the amounts in the corresponding Bill of last year. Why was the amount for Great Britain increased from £6,000,000 to £7,000,000 and the amount for Ireland from £800,000 to £900,000? This was the first Bill in which an amount exceeding £100 had appeared against Scotland, but with regard to Ireland, he often wondered why anyone in that country ever repaid a loan at all, as they all appeared to get off. He should like to ask the Secretary to the Treasury if the writing off was brought up to date. He thought that highly improbable, having regard to the small sums which appeared in the Bill against Ireland. It was often stated that although the money was written off, the Government retained the right to recover it. He had often asked how much had been recovered in that way, but as far as he could find out not a penny had ever been recovered. He thought Public Works Loans Bills were a device to enable people to get rid of the payment of loans. He hoped the Treasury would make the strictest investigation with regard to all these loans, as it seemed to him that they were too easily wiped off. That was not fair to those who really struggled honestly to pay what they had borrowed.

*MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty) said with reference to the amount written off on loans to the fishermen of Stornoway, he wished to point out that the fishermen were not dishonest, but were very careful to pay their debts. The fault lay with the Fishery Board of Scotland, in pressing on the fishermen, who were badly off for boats, a class of boat not suited to the harbours in the district. Some of the boats were damaged, but the fishermen still continued to pay until they could pay no longer. If the Board had only supplied the proper kind of boats, there would be no arrears. He only marvelled that the people paid up so well in the circumstances.

MR. H. J. WILSON (Yorkshire, W.R., Holmfirth) said that by a little frank explanation at the beginning of the proceedings on the Bill all this discussion would have been avoided. In order to elicit further information he moved that the Bill be read a second time this day three months.

AN HON. MEMBER formally seconded.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day three months.'"—(*Mr. H. J. Wilson.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

MR. DALZIEL asked whether the Government were really going to refuse the information asked for. All they desired to know was under what circumstances this particular loan of £7,000, of which £5,900 was to be written off, was granted. The Lord Advocate was now present: did he know anything about it?

*THE LORD ADVOCATE (Mr. A. GRAHAM MURRAY, Buteshire) said he did, and so would the hon. Member if he had read Section 3 of the Bill. The debt was made in 1882, when a Liberal Government was in office, and that was the whole explanation. Why the money could not now be recovered was that the harbour had been under a judicial factor for many years, and no money had been coming in.

MR. WHITLEY said that his question with regard to the small items in the schedule had not been answered. His point was that public works loans were not intended for such matters as the purchase of fishing boats. The Bill ought to be reserved for such substantial works as the construction of piers and harbours, which could not be carried out without the aid of public credit.

Question put, and agreed to.

Mr. Weir.

Main Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed for Monday next.

PUBLIC BUILDINGS EXPENSES [CONSOLIDATED FUND].

Resolution reported. "That it is expedient to make further provision for defraying the expenses of the purchase of Land and Buildings and the construction of Buildings and Works in connection with certain Public Departments, and to authorise the issue out of the Consolidated Fund of any sums not exceeding in the whole £1,790,000 for such purposes, and to authorise the Treasury to borrow for the purpose of providing money for sums to be issued out of the Consolidated Fund, or for the repayment of sums so issued, by means of Terminable Annuities for such period not exceeding thirty years from the dates of borrowing, such Annuities to be paid out of moneys to be provided by Parliament for the service of the Commissioners of Works, and if those moneys are insufficient out of the Consolidated Fund."

Resolution agreed to.

Bill ordered to be brought in upon the said Resolution by Mr. Elliot, Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Mr. Victor Cavendish.

PUBLIC BUILDINGS EXPENSES BILL.

"To make further provision for defraying the Expenses of the purchase of Land and Buildings and the construction of Buildings and Works in connection with certain Public Departments," presented accordingly, and read the first time; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 305.]

STATUTE LAW REVISION (SCOTLAND) BILL [LORDS].

Order for Committee read, and discharged:—Bill withdrawn.

Whereupon, in pursuance of the Order of the House of the 28th day of July, Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House without Question put.

Adjourned at Ten minutes after One o'clock.

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Friday, 31*st July* 1903.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

The LORD CHANCELLOR acquainted the House that the Clerk of the Parliaments had laid upon the Table the Certificate from the Examiners that the further Standing Orders applicable to the following Bill have been complied with: Post Office Sites.

Also a certificate that in the case of the following Bill (referred to them by order of the House of the 14th instant), the provisions of the Bill have been approved of at a meeting of the members of the Clogher Valley Railway Company, held in accordance with the requirements of Standing Order No. 64. Ulster and Connaught Light Railways.

The same were ordered to lie on the Table.

Manchester Southern Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Commons Amendments considered and agreed to.

Crystal Palace District Gas Bill; Reported from the Select Committee, with Amendments.

Castleblayney, Keady, and Armagh Railway (Extension of Time) Bill; Read 3^{a}, and passed.

Ebbw Vale Water and Improvement Bill, now Ebbw Vale Improvement Bill; Western Valleys (Monmouthshire) Sewerage Board Bill; Stroud and District Tramways Bill; Erith Tramways and Improvement Bill. Read 3^{a}, with the Amendments, and passed, and returned to the Commons.

North Metropolitan Electric Power Supply Bill [H.L.]; Moved, That Standing Order No. 143a be dispensed with, and that the Bill be now read 3^{a}; agreed to; Bill read 3^{a} accordingly, and passed, and sent to the Commons.

Chard Corporation Gas and Electricity Bill [H.L.]; Rochester Corporation Tramways and Improvements Bill [H.L.]. Returned from the Commons agreed to, with Amendments.

Gosport and Fareham Tramways Bill [H.L.]. Returned from the Commons agreed to, with Amendments. The said Amendments considered, and agreed to.

Great Western Railway Bill; Lancashire and Yorkshire and London and North-Western Railways (Steam Vessels) Bill; Neath, Pontardawe, and Brynaman Railway Bill. Returned from the Commons, with the Amendments agreed to.

Tramways Orders Confirmation (No. 1) Bill [H.L.]. Tramways Orders Confirmation (No. 2) Bill [H.L.]. Commons Amendments to be considered on Monday next.

Local Government (Ireland) Provisional Orders (No. 5) Bill; Metropolitan Police Provisional Order Bill. Read 3^{a} (according to order), and passed.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

BOARD OF EDUCATION.

General reports of His Majesty's Inspectors on elementary schools and training colleges, for the year 1902.

MARRIAGES, BIRTHS, AND DEATHS (IRELAND).

Thirty-ninth annual report of the Registrar-General, for the year 1902.

FISHERIES (IRELAND).

Report of the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction for Ireland on the sea and inland fisheries of Ireland, for the year 1902 (Part I. General Report).

QUEEN'S COLLEGE, BELFAST.

Annual Report of the President, for the year 1902–3.

INDUSTRIAL ASSOCIATIONS.

Directory of Industrial Associations in the United Kingdom in 1903.

LIGHT LOAD LINE, 1903.

Papers showing the action taken by the Board of Trade with regard to certain recommendations made by the Select Committee of the House of Lords on Light Load Line.

RAILWAY RETURNS.

Returns of the capital, traffic, receipts, and working expenditure of the Railway Companies of the United Kingdom for the year 1902; with a General Report thereon and Summary Tables for a series of years.

NAVY (HEALTH).

Statistical Report of the health of the Navy, for the year 1902.

INDIA (RAILWAYS).

Report on the administration and working of Indian railways, by Thomas Robertson, C.V.O., Special Commissioner for Indian Railways.

Presented (by command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

NAVAL PRIZE MONEY.

Account showing the receipt and expenditure of naval prize, bounty, and salvage, and other moneys between 1st April, 1902, and 31st March, 1903. Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

THE MILITIA BALLOT.

THE EARL OF WEMYSS: My Lords, I have so often spoken upon this subject that I do not propose to make any remarks in putting the Question which stands in my name to the noble Duke, and which reads as follows:—"To ask the President of the Council of Imperial Defence whether the question of the Militia ballot has engaged the attention of the Council, and further, inasmuch as Lord Lansdowne when Secretary for War, brought in an amending Bill bringing the present Militia Ballot Act up to date, and proceeded no further with it; is it the intention of His Majesty's Government, at any time, to proceed with this Bill, and to pass it into law; and if so, when." If your Lordships will look at the paper you will see that I have a Militia Ballot Bill down for Second Reading, and that will enable me, if anything is said by the noble Duke in answer to this Question which appears to me to require a reply, to say what I have to say then. At present I confine myself to putting the Question standing in my name.

THE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE): My Lords, I think it must be clear to your Lordships that the proceedings of the Committee of Defence are, and must be, of an extremely confidential character, and that it is my duty, as President of the Committee, to be extremely cautious in giving any reply to the Question of the noble Earl which might in any way be drawn into a precedent for further inquiries on matters under the consideration of the Committee. I believe that it is quite true that a statement was made the other day in the other House of Parliament relating to a force being maintained in South Africa, in which, reference was made to the fact that the question had been under the consideration of the Defence Committee, and that the proposals of the Government were founded upon the recommendations of the Committee. Well, my Lords, that statement related to a subject which the Government had considered, and on which it was prepared on its own responsibility to make a proposal, and the fact, therefore, that it had been considered, before the Government made a definite proposal, by the Committee could be stated, no doubt, without any inconvenience. But the matters with which this Committee has had, and may have, in the future to deal are, as I have stated, of so confidential a character, that I think it will be well in the future to err rather on the side of prudence and caution, and to refrain as far as possible from any reference to the proceedings of a Committee which are necessarily of so confidential a character. What Parliament has, I conceive, to deal with, are the decisions which are arrived at by the Government, necessarily on its own responsibility; and I am quite sure that the Government has no desire, neither would it be justified in sheltering itself in regard to any decision behind the decision of a Committee of this character. I must, therefore, decline to give any further answer to the first part of the noble Earl's Question. The noble Earl, however, asks in the latter part of the Question whether it is the intention of His Majesty's Government at any time to proceed with the Bill which was introduced some sessions ago by my noble friend Lord Lansdowne, when Secretary of State for War, and to pass it into law, and, if so, when. I think in putting that Question the noble Earl must have forgotten that at an earlier period of the session the Government recommended the appointment of a Commission, the reference to which was:

> "To inquire into the organisation, numbers, and terms of service of our Militia and Volunteer forces, and to report whether any, and if any what, changes are required in order to secure that those forces should be maintained in a condition of military efficiency, and at an adequate strength."

I think it must be quite clear to the House, and I trust also to the noble Earl, that a time when this Commission has been appointed and is conducting its investigations, would be the very last at which it would occur to the Government to proceed with a Bill dealing with part of the very subject under the consideration of the Commission. Therefore the only answer which I can give to the noble Earl is that it certainly is not the intention of the Government at the present time to proceed with the measure, and its action as to the future must depend, at all events, in part upon the Report which it may obtain from the Commission which has been appointed.

MILITIA BALLOT BILL (H.L.).

[SECOND READING.]

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

THE EARL OF WEMYSS: My Lords, the Bill which I hold in my hand is the measure referred to in the latter part of the Question to which the noble Duke has just replied. I thank my noble friend the President of the Committee of Imperial Defence for his courteous statement, and I quite admit the soundness of his arguments for not giving an answer. But it seemed to me that it was desirable to keep this Question, which deals with the very foundation of military defence, alive. The Bill is, in fact, Lord Lansdowne's Bill, introduced when he was Secretary of State for War; and when the noble Marquess presented the Bill he admitted that the present law with regard to the Militia Ballot is obsolete and requires to be amended, and he stated that this Bill was for the purpose of bringing the Militia Ballot up to date. It is an absurd position for any nation to occupy to have a military system which rests as its sure foundation on the Militia Ballot, on compulsory home service, and then to allow a measure of this kind, brought in by the Minister for War, to meet an emergency that may at any rate arise, to lie on the Table. I have simply put this Bill down, as I have said, to keep the matter alive; and I formally move the Second Reading in case any noble Lord wishes to say anything on the subject. It is a matter which should be dealt with by the Government. I should like to quote from a preface to a pamphlet on the Militia and Volunteers which was issued in February of this year, because it expresses exactly the present situation with regard to military matters:—

> "In these days, when so much is said and written *re* Army re-organisation; when so-called re-organisation is being attempted by building on the 'bed rock' of thinnest air, to the ignoring and neglect of our existing military system which rests absolutely in principle—aye, and in law, annually suspended—on the Crown's immemorial right to call upon its subjects to serve compulsorily for Home Defence; and when the possibility of our Navy failing to ensure our food supply in time of war has led to the formation of the Food Supply in Time of War Association—it seems to me useful to republish some matter bearing upon Home Defence and our existing military system. Further, I would point out, when it is said that our Navy is an all-sufficient security against invasion, that the coracles, or navy, of the period did not keep the Vikings from our shores, nor prevent the successful occupation of Britain by the Romans for 400 years; also that the navy of the day did not save us from the Norman invasion and conquest; nor prevent the landing of William of Orange in England, nor of the Pretender in Scotland, nor of General Hoche in Ireland. The fact is that no nation in the world has been so variously and successfully subjected to invasion as the British people, in whose veins now runs the mixed blood resulting therefrom, *plus* in some quarters, a Spanish infusion due to the Armada wreckage on our coasts. And well would it be for us now if we had a Good Queen Bess ruling at the Admiralty and War Office, for, not satisfied with her fleets and sea power under the Howards, Drakes, and Frobishers of the period, she had our Home Land Defences so completely organised that it was even laid down how many horse shoes and nails each company should carry as part of its equipment. Since then 300 years and more have come and gone. Let the War Office say whether or no our means of land defence are in the days of Edward the VII., relatively equivalent to those of the Elizabethan period of our history. If not, let the nation insist on their being made so, without an hour's delay, by putting in force our existing military system, and by casting all novel, costly, vain, military imaginings to the winds."

You are going to take 25,000 men out of England and station them in South Africa, therefore the defensive power of England will be 25,000 men short. General Peel introduced a Militia Army Reserve under which the Militia gave voluntarily a certain number of men—30,000—to the Army. He intended that for every one so given another should be raised, but that has not been done and the Militia Reserve has been abolished; therefore the Army is 30,000 men short on that head alone. I think this state of things requires very serious consideration on the part of the Government. Ministers should do their duty by the nation and put in force the Act which they annually suspend. There is no nation, civilised or uncivilised, that has a military system where those who are responsible for its administration and for the safety of the nation have not the courage to enforce it. I do not think the public would object, but the Government fear that votes might be lost if they enforced compulsory home defence. I have some right to speak on this subject with knowledge, because two or three years ago I issued a circular to all lords-lieutenant, chairmen of County Councils, chairmen of quarter sessions, mayors, provosts and other officials throughout the country, asking them whether they were satisfied with our present state of national defence, and seventy-five per cent. replied that they were not satisfied. The second question I put to them was whether they believed that the people of this country would accept ballot for the Militia in an amended and simple form. At present ballot for the Militia means that every man from eighteen to forty-five years of age is liable. All that is needed is that every man who attains the age of twenty and is not serving the State in the Army, the Navy, the Volunteers, the Police, or in some other form, should be liable to ballot for the Militia. The replies I received to the effect that the writers thought the nation would accept such a modification were two to one of the total.

It is, of course, folly to think of proceeding at this time with this Bill, and I have only moved it in order to draw attention to the present state of things. I do not ask that the Government should enforce the ballot, but that they should bring it to that state at which it is available if needed. At present it is of no value at all. I hope this subject will be considered by the Commission to which the question of the Militia and Volunteer forces has been referred, and that they will take a sensible view of it and recommend the adoption of this Bill. I resigned my commission in the Volunteers because I felt that that force was being used by the Government in order to save them from doing what they would have to do if the Volunteers did not exist, namely, pass this Bill and put the Militia Ballot into force. The new policy adopted by the Government in regard to the Volunteers has reduced the number of that force by 100,000 men. Instead of having a small force highly trained, the right idea should be to have a large body of Volunteers sufficiently trained, so that when the alarm came they would, by a little drilling, be efficient to take their place in home defence. I think the view that has been taken by the War Office of the place in our defensive position of the Volunteers is an entirely wrong one. The whole spirit of the Volunteer force is that it is for home defence, and for home defence only; and yet the Government are encouraging them to go abroad. I know as regards my own regiment that they sent out one or two gallant companies to South Africa, but I contend that before they went out they should have resigned their positions in the Volunteer regiments, because otherwise you have the "stay-at-homes" and the "go-and fights," which is contrary to the whole spirit of the force. Let us hope that through the action of the Commission to which my noble friend has referred some good may be done. I formally move the Second Reading of the Bill.

Moved—

"That the Bill be now read 2a."—(*The Earl of Wemyss.*)

THE UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (The Earl of HARDWICKE): My Lords, I do not rise for the purpose of following the noble Earl in the remarks he has addressed to the House, because I think that the noble Duke behind me has given a sufficient reason for not consenting to the Second Reading of this Bill. I only rise to repeat to the noble Earl what I stated earlier in this session, that it is really not quite fair to His Majesty's Government, or to the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, who introduced this Bill when Minister for War, to say that having introduced the Bill the noble Marquess then left it on the Table without making any effort to induce the Government to proceed with it. The noble Marquess stated distinctly on introducing the Bill that it was a tentative measure, that he did not intend to proceed with it, and could not hold out any hope that it would be proceeded with that session, or in any subsequent session. If the noble Earl supposes that this Bill will remedy the present chaotic and discordant series of Acts of Parliament which have to do with the Militia Ballot and the Militia, he is very much mistaken. All that this Bill does is to show prominently certain lines on which it will be necessary, if it is ever intended to put the Militia Ballot into force, to prepare a further Bill, which will have to take the form of a consolidating Bill. Since I have been at the War Office this subject has been very thoroughly gone into, and if such a Bill is to be brought in it will have to be one of about ninety clauses, and containing some sixty or seventy pages.

THE EARL OF WEMYSS: I beg to withdraw the Bill, but I think the noble Earl's explanation makes the Government case much worse.

Motion and Bill (by leave of the House) withdrawn.

MARRIAGE WITH A DECEASED WIFE'S SISTER.

THE DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND: My Lords, I beg to ask His Majesty's Government whether it is a fact that marriage with the sister or niece of a deceased wife has been recently legalised in the British East African Protectorate; and if so, upon what grounds this step has been taken.

*THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF AGRICULTURE (The Earl of ONSLOW): My Lords, in the absence of the noble Marquess the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, who is in Ireland in attendance on His Majesty, I have been asked to reply to the Question of the noble Duke. It is perfectly correct to say that an ordinance is in existence in the British East African Protectorate which enables a man to marry his deceased wife's sister or niece. The noble Duke asks upon what grounds it was passed. It has been in existence in South Nigeria for some years, and when the Foreign Office were framing marriage laws for East Africa they took as their model the South Nigerian marriage law. The law in South Nigeria is taken from ordinances which were in existence in Lagos and the Gold Coast territory. Those laws were sanctioned by the late Lord Derby, who allowed the question of marriage with a deceased wife's sister to be settled by local opinion and local considerations. In that way the law in Africa, both East and West, has grown up, and is similar on both sides of the continent.

*THE LORD ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY: My Lords, I should like to be allowed to say a word in connection with the answer which has just been given. I venture to hope that this matter will be further looked into, and that care will be taken that we do not inadvertently drift into a condition of marriage-law legislation as regards the Protectorates in Africa, which would affect very much larger and more far-reaching questions than marriage with a deceased wife's sister. I have had the advantage, by the courtesy of the noble Earl, of looking at the ordinance, which is now, I understand, the law in the East African Protectorate. I understand that it was only in consequence of a protest which has reached the Commissioner in Uganda that the ordinance is not also enforced there; and that both in Uganda and in the East African Protectorate those who are most conversant with the whole question of civilisation for these people feel that the ordinances, as at present drafted, are almost absurdly inapplicable to the circumstances. This is quite apart from any mere question of marriage with a deceased wife's sister. True, there are some 80,000 Christians in the Protectorate of Uganda consisting entirely of converts to the Anglican Church or to the Roman Catholic Church, and they are at this moment practically unanimous in disapproving of and disliking this particular provision. But the question is a much larger one. The new Marriage Law is, I am told, absolutely contrary to a treaty which had been made with the native chiefs to the effect that no additional tax should be imposed upon them except under certain peculiar circumstances therein described. This ordinance does impose an additional tax upon them, and, in short, the matter seems to have been enacted originally in one place and to meet one condition of things, and afterwards applied to quite a different sort of region and to another condition of things altogether. All I would ask is, that the matter should be most carefully looked into, so that before the law is made operative over a wider region than at present, we may, at least, understand that every inquiry has been made among those most cognisant of the position of affairs.

THE DUKE OF NORTHUMBERLAND: I should like to ask the noble Earl whether there is the smallest hope of recalling this ordinance in the East African Protectorate, and whether he will give some pledge to the House, on behalf of the Government, that such ordinances will not be enacted in the future for other protectorates without Parliament having, at any rate, some opportunity of expressing its opinion. It seems to me that the answer which my noble friend has given makes the matter a good deal more serious. We are told that this legislation was inaugurated in Lagos because of local feeling and local consideration. I should like to know what the local considerations in regard to Lagos are. As to local feeling, in most of these parts of Africa they are very strongly in favour of a good many things which are undesirable. Probably local feeling is in favour of polygamy and other divers things which I will not specify. If you are to legislate by local feeling for protectorates in which the population is to a large extent savage, I think it will carry you a considerable way. As the most reverend Prelate has pointed out, this is not merely a question of marriage with a deceased wife's sister or niece; but I venture to think it is a most serious thing that the Marriage Law should be altered in this way without giving Parliament any opportunity of becoming aware of the fact or of expressing its opinion upon it. Although it may be argued that many Colonial Legislatures have sanctioned marrriage with a deceased wife's sister, I would point out that marriage with a deceased wife's niece is going a considerable step further than even many Colonial Legislatures have dared to go. Surely, in the absence of any definite expression from Parliament of its will in this matter, common sense would insist on the advisability of maintaining the English Law in protectorates under the Foreign Office.

LORD JAMES OF HEREFORD: I should like to ask whether it is not the fact that every self-governing colony, without exception, has rendered marriage with a deceased wife's sister legal, and that these laws have been approved by the Home Government. I should have thought marriage with a deceased wife's niece was one step further off and was even preferable to legalising marriage with a deceased wife's sister. Although all the self-governing colonies have passed this law, and although the House of Commons over and over again by majorities of two to one have passed a Bill to effect that object, the noble Duke asks that the Government should come to Parliament before legalising such a marriage in any British protectorate. That would be casting a burden on Parliament which no one would desire unless it be to prevent particular legislation to which they object, but which, according to the view of the majority of our fellow subjects abroad and in this country, is regarded as wise and beneficent legislation.

*THE EARL OF ONSLOW: In reply to the noble Duke, I believe the Foreign Office are considering at this moment the question of the uniformity of the marriage laws in all protectorates under their charge. The noble Duke also asked that before ordinances are passed there should be an opportunity given for the Imperial Parliament to consider them and rectify them. That would be an entirely new departure; but the noble Duke is well aware that opportunities always occur, both in this House and the other House of Parliament, for criticising the policy adopted in the protectorate States and the Crown colonies; and no doubt if the noble Duke, or any other noble Lord, wishes to raise the question he will have ample opportunity of doing so. With regard to the Question put to me by Lord James, I have not looked up the matter carefully, but I believe he is substantially correct in saying that in all the self-governing colonies marriage with a deceased wife's sister is permissible. But that legislation, of course, is passed by the responsible governments of the colonies, and although it is subject to the approval of the Crown, it is in a different position from the ordinances which are passed in Crown colonies.

THE LORD BISHOP OF HEREFORD: What is the date of the ordinance?

*THE EARL OF ONSLOW: January 1, 1903.

The subject then dropped.

THE DOUAI BENEDICTINES.

LORD HERRIES, who had given notice of the following Question:—"To ask His Majesty's Government if they are aware that a college for the education of British students at Douai has recently been suppressed and its property sequestrated, although large sums of money have been expended within the last few years by British subjects for the enlargement and improvement of the college buildings; and if they are prepared to make friendly representations to the French Government, with a view to obtaining some compensation for the great loss which has been sustained by British subjects" said: My Lords, since I put this Question on the Paper a similar Question has been asked in the other House and Papers promised on the subject, but, notwithstanding that, I think I may as well put the Question here, in order to ascertain from His Majesty's Government whether they are prepared to consider the representations which have been made to them to secure some sort of compensation to the Benedictines who have been turned out of Douai.

Perhaps I may be allowed to explain the circumstances of the case. This particular college at Douai has been in existence for about 300 years. It was one of those educational establishments which were started in the time of Queen Elizabeth, as in those days the Roman Catholics of this country were not allowed to have their families educated in this country, and therefore several establishments were started on the Continent in order that these children might be sent there for their education. The one in Douai itself was started in 1615, and since that time it has been the property of the Benedictines, but it has always been considered English property. The Benedictines are devoted to educational work and also to literary pursuits, and therefore I do not see why there should be any objection at all to their being protected, as far as they can be protected, by the law of this country. I daresay your Lordships will remember that when the Benedictine monasteries were suppressed in Italy, Mr Gladstone interceded specially on behalf of two, on account of their historical associations and the literary character of their teaching. The result was that those two monasteries were saved, whereas all the others were confiscated; and I think that when that very distinguished Sovereign the Emperor of Germany went to Italy recently, his principal object was to visit one of those two monasteries.

But to return to Douai. The college at Douai was saved in 1790, because at that time the National Assembly considered it an English institution. In its decree it said—

> "The Benedictines may be allowed to enjoy their property secured by them out of their resources and of others of their nation."

Again, in the spring of 1793, it was recognised as English when, by the decree of the National Assembly, all the property of the educational institutions in France was confiscated. What Robespierre declined to do in 1793 has been done in the last few months by the French Government. I should also like to point out that at the end of 1793 the school at Douai was confiscated because France was at war with England and this school was the property of English subjects, showing that up to that time it was always recognised as English property. The house and property were taken possession of, and the inmates, numbering, I think, about twenty or thirty at that time, were sent to prison.

This state of things continued for some time. In 1803-5, the Emperor Napoleon recognised that this property which had been confiscated was, properly speaking, British property, and he ordered it, with one or two other English institutions which existed in France at that time, to be placed under one administration, known as the *Bureau des Fondations Anglaises.* Distinction was made, then, between what was French and what was English property. For example, at Douai, the church and part of the house was considered French property, because it had originally belonged to a suppressed Abbey in France. The remainder of the building was considered English property, and was therefore put under the management of this *Bureau,* to whom was given the administration of all English property. In 1826 a certain sum of money was paid over by the French Government as compensation to those English subjects who had sustained loss during the war between France and England, and claims were made by the Benedictines for a portion of that money to be repaid to them. The English Government of the day refused to pay this money over, and the question came before the Privy Council in 1826. Lord Gifford decided against these claims because, although the members of these establishments were British subjects, the aims and objects of the establishments were not authorised by, but were directly opposed to, British law. That was before the Emancipation Act.

I maintain that since the Emancipation Act the giving of such education abroad is not opposed to English law, and surely therefore if these establishments are closed the property belonging to them ought to be recognised as English property, and some claim should be made on the French Government for compensation for their confiscation Since 1826 large sums of money have been spent on these buildings. I know one gentleman who has spent £10,000 on this building at Douai within the last few years, and what I ask His Majesty's Government to do is to represent to the French Government that, on the understanding and on the supposition that the buildings were English property, this English gentleman has spent £10,000 upon them, and that some compensation at least might be given to him. I put it to His Majesty's Government that this is a case similar to that of a company managing a commercial undertaking. If an English company managing a commercial undertaking had settled in France, and for some reason or other the French Government thought it necessary to do away with it, I think in all probability the company would come to the English Government, and we should recognise their claims to some sort of compensation, and should make strong representations to the French Government with a view of obtaining that compensation. I am quite sure that if any similar case happened in Venezuela, or in any such country, the claim would be urged very strongly.

We are now on the most friendly terms with France, and I cannot help thinking that if remonstrances were made to the French Government they would be prepared to consider the special circumstances of the case and give some sort of compensation. It may be true, indeed, that in this particular establishment at Douai students were taught to believe in the existence of Almighty God and in a future life—doctrines which I believe are not now allowed to be taught in the schools of France according to the principles of the French Government. But it is not the case that any French students have been taught there. They are entirely English, and the principles that have been taught, I am happy to say, are the principles of the English nation. I hope His Majesty's Government will consider this matter.

*THE EARL OF ONSLOW: My Lords, I have been asked by my noble friend Lord Lansdowne to reply to the Question of the noble Lord, and I would like to assure him at once that His Majesty's Government sympathise very deeply with the English citizens who have been turned out of their seminary; but they have chosen to establish themselves in a foreign country, and, like everyone else, they must be prepared to bow to the law of the land in which they are domiciled. The French Government have acted throughout in this matter with an evident desire to meet the wishes of the British Government as far as they are compatible with the law of France. M. Delcassè has informed the British Ambassador that if there were any binding treaty to which he could point, it would be received with the greatest possible consideration by the French Government.

The noble Lord talked a great deal about the "confiscation" of the property of the Benedictines. As to that, I rather doubt whether, in the right sense of the word, there has been, or is likely to be, any such thing. At the present moment there is a liquidator in possession of the premises, but he is dealing only with the movable property of the Benedictines, which amounts to £1,000 or £1,500, and which will not much more than cover the debts of the Benedictines to the local tradesmen, which will be discharged out of the realisation of that property. As to the real property, that is held under the Bureau des Fondations Anglaises, to which the noble Lord has referred, but the Benedictines are not the owners in fee, but merely the tenants, and the Association law does not touch such property in any way, nor is there any reason to believe that the liquidator will sell it. On the contrary, I am assured that they are prepared to pay over the revenues to the Benedictines provided they are devoted to the maintenance of students in France. The noble Lord will find upon inquiry that there is no intention to confiscate the property on the wholesale scale he suggests. But I cannot hold out any hope that His Majesty's Government will press the French Government to do more for these English subjects who have settled in France than they would do for Frenchmen living in their own country.

LORD HERRIES: What does the noble Lord propose to do in the case of the house bought by students at Douai?

*__THE EARL OF ONSLOW__: It still belongs to the students, but they are not allowed to inhabit it.

The subject then dropped.

THE PRICE OF BREAD AND THE CORN DUTY.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN: My Lords, I rise to call attention to the price of bread during the last three months, and to move for Papers. It is hardly necessary to point out to your Lordships that this question has an intimate connection with the shilling registration duty on corn, which has been abolished, and the effect of the abolition of which came into operation on 1st July. I waited until the 1st July, because I wished to see whether up to that time any effect, and, if so, what, was produced upon the price of bread, and I have now in my hand, through the courtesy of the Department of Agriculture, the Returns of the Board of Trade for the month of July this year, which I imagine must be as recent information as they are able to give. These Returns relate to London and twenty-five large provincial towns, and I find that for the last three months—that is, for May, June, and July—no variation whatever of any sort or kind has taken place in the price of bread. I find further, going back as far as 1st July last year, that only one change has taken place in any one of those twenty-five towns during that time, and that was in the Potteries district, where from February of the present year the price has been 4½d., and where in the month of October, 1902, and from then back to the month of July, 1902, the price had been 4d. I think that these figures are very important as bearing upon this registration duty, which has recently been abolished.

It is hardly necessary that I should remind your Lordships of the history of that tax. Most of your Lordships must be familiar with it, but perhaps I may, in a word or two, recall what has happened. After the Corn Laws were abolished that duty existed up to the year 1869, when it was abolished by Mr. Lowe. In those days, fortunately, surpluses were a continual event, and Mr. Lowe, with that logical mind for which he was so well known, thought it desirable to reduce the last vestige of anything that could be called a tax on corn, and he abolished it. At that time the price of bread was not affected; the consumer got nothing by it, but the tax, which produced £900,000 at that time, was gone. Things remained so until 1902, when Sir Michael Hicks Beach re-imposed the tax. He was in search, he said, of some new tax which would produce a large revenue and interfere as little as possible with consumers and with trade; and he re-imposed the duty, the result far exceeding his expectations. The duty itself amounted, I think, to about £2,400,000. The price of bread, except in a few instances, did not in any way rise, and even the volume of imports was not checked. From these Returns it appears that the imports of wheat from foreign countries in ten months up to June 30 amounted to 67,000,000 cwts., in round numbers, compared with 60,000.000 cwts. in the corresponding ten months of 1901-2, while the imports of wheat, meal, and flour amounted to nearly 16,000,000 cwts., compared with very nearly the same number of cwts. in the preceding ten months. At the same time there was no effect produced, except in certain temporary instances, on the price of bread to the consumer.

So pleased was Sir Michael Hicks Beach with the result of the tax that he afterwards told us that he intended, when the war had ceased, not to interfere with it, but to make it a part of the permanent taxation of the country. It was quite certain, of course, that there would be an outcry against this tax. There are two sorts of politicians who are not likely to lose such an opportunity. In the first place there are the philosophic politicians, to whom the mention of the word "corn" is very much what the showing of a red rag is to a bull, and who appear to lose all their reasoning powers. They go back to the days preceding 1846. They decline to think what the effects of the tax may be on the consumer or anybody else, but they immediately lay down as a rule which must not be transgressed that a tax on corn, whatever may be its effect, must be an abominable thing. There is another set of politicians—more worldly minded men—who are well aware of the value of a cry, or of anything that can be elevated into a cry at a time when they are in Opposition; and both these sets of politicans did their best during the autumn of last year. Some of my noble friends on the front Opposition Bench delivered most enthusiastic and animated speeches, and I daresay in certain cases they persuaded people that this tax was one which pressed hardly upon them and ought to be removed. Their curse was probably as terrible a curse as ever was uttered; but the prosaic result was that the price of bread remained unaltered. I think that that cry was made the most of, but I respectfully venture to doubt whether any practical advantage was obtained by all their endeavours. But, however that may be, the important fact is that the price of bread remained the same.

Now, my Lords, that brings us to the present year, and the present Chancellor of the Exchequer, who, I much regret to say, has abolished this tax; and his reasons for doing so, to one person at all events who heard him, did not appear to be very strong. He said that corn was an article of very large consumption indeed, which was quite true; he said that the duty was inelastic, which was true also; and I think he said that corn was a raw material. But the most important thing he said was that it lends itself very readily to "misrepresentation." That argument, I am afraid, was the strongest the right hon. Gentleman could produce, but it was a most unfortunate argument to use. It was quite certain that the imposition of any tax upon corn would be resented by a certain number of the community, and that the Government of the day which imposed it would incur a certain amount of unpopularity; but all that had been gone through, and the tax had been found a very beneficial one, and had not resulted in an increase in the price of bread. Notwithstanding this, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, with, I humbly suggest, insufficient reason, abolished the tax.

Does the consumer benefit in any way whatever by the abolition of this tax? It has been contended with regard to other articles—for instance, in the case of sugar—that although British colonies may be destroyed by bounties given on sugar, yet nevertheless over here the consumer benefits, and that therefore we have no right to object to these bounties, and things ought to be allowed to go on as best they may. In this case, however, this argument will not apply. The consumer suffered nothing when the tax was originally in force, gained nothing when it was abolished for the first time, suffered nothing when put on a second time, and the experience of the last few months shows that he will gain nothing by its abolition for the second time. Who has profited? That is just what no one can say. Some people say it is the American railways and the other modes of transportation on the other side of the Atlantic. Some say that in some mysterious manner the consumer over here gains, but how they are unable to show; but the practical result is that the price of bread remains absolutely the same. It is, of course, possible that in some infinitesimal degree the bakers may gain, but, apart from the bakers, I do not know of any other gainer who can be suggested.

All taxes, of course, are bad, but this tax had several merits so far as a tax can have merits. In the first place, it was a new tax, an addition to the number of taxes—a thing which every Chancellor of the Exchequer has been in search of for years. It produced a large revenue not felt in any way by the consumer, and it fulfilled the object of meeting increased expenditure. Do any of your Lordships think that we are likely to see any diminution of expenditure? I would remind the House of the new measures of public education, one of which we have passed, and the other of which we are now passing. It is as certain as anything can be that those Education Acts will mean a large and considerable increase of expenditure. I am not speaking without some experience in this matter, because I happen to be on one of the County Education Committees, and I can see very clearly indeed, even at this early stage, in what direction the operation of that Act is tending. There is another great source of expenditure—namely, the Navy. The expenditure on the Navy is now between £33,000,000 and £34,000,000, and Lord Selborne rather alarmed me, for one, by telling us, as he did not long ago, that we must expect a very considerable increase in that expenditure.

Now, my Lords, what is the purpose of the Navy? Its main and principal purpose is to act as an insurance upon food. A Royal Commission is at the present time sitting to inquire into our food supply in time of war. None of us know, of course, what they may report, but of one thing I am convinced, that public granaries or any expedients of that sort would not be of the slightest possible value. If that be so, and if no better expedients can be devised, we have to fall back on the Navy and take our chance; and one of its principal objects is to provide, so far as a Navy can provide, for the security of the food supply of this country. Public education is given in the interests of the whole body of the nation, and for securing our supplies of food the Navy is kept up in the interests of the whole body of the nation. Is it, therefore, unfair and unreasonable that to some slight extent, at all events—which was the fact under this shilling registration duty—the body of the nation should pay for better education as well as for the insurance of its food supplies? It seems to me that no fairer application of public money could be made. No tax was so little felt as the shilling registration duty on corn. Yet that revenue has been thrown, as I humbly suggest, into the sea, and I submit that the consumers of bread, the operatives of this country, are by no means the gainers as the result. I regret that this policy has been adopted, and conclude by moving for any further Papers there may be on the subject.

EARL SPENCER: My Lords, my noble friend has not spoken in flattering terms of the views held on this subject by the front Opposition Bench. He alluded to two classes of politicians. I do not know in which category I should place myself, and I am not quite sure whether the policy of looking out for a "cry" is to be reckoned as the exclusive privilege of the Opposition. I rather think that the policy of searching for a cry belongs to some members of the Government. There can be no doubt that there is likely to be larger expenditure on education and an increase in the heavy charges entailed by the Navy. But I differ from the noble Lord in thinking that a slight tax on corn is permissible in order to relieve the taxpayers in other respects. It is one of the most injurious taxes that could possibly be levied, and I doubt very much whether those who are arguing in favour of the new fiscal policy of the Colonial Secretary would be content with what the noble Lord has called a mere registration tax. In order to carry out their views, it is certain that those who support the Colonial Secretary would have to go further in devising new means of taxation.

There is certainly a difference of opinion as to whether the corn tax has or has not raised the price of bread. In some places the price of bread has been raised, and in other places it has remained stationary. I know it is the opinion of many that if the tax had not been put on, the price of bread would have been lower than it was before. That is the answer to a great extent to the argument of the noble Lord. The noble Lord has moved for a Return of the price of bread for three months, but that would not be affected by the retention or the removal of the tax. There are many other circumstances which have to be taken into consideration. If we are to have a Return at all, we ought to have a Return covering a much larger period, and if we had that Return we should probably find the same phenomenon as that to which my noble friend has directed our attention. I have not seen the Returns to which reference has been made by the noble Lord, but I should like to know whether the prices given are wholesale or retail. If they are retail, it would be a most fallacious argument, because the retail price of bread varies greatly, there being one price for richer persons and another price for poorer persons in the same village. The only scientific Return on which to rely is the wholesale price of bread, and I should like to know from the Government whether the Return is for wholesale or retail.

*THE EARL OF ONSLOW: My Lords, when I saw the notice on the Paper I welcomed an addition to the ranks of those who were inquiring into the subject, and I thought that perhaps the noble Lord would express a hope that the Government would by-and-by furnish him with some *data* on which he could form his opinions on the great questions which are agitating your Lordships' House. But I find that that was not his object, that he was merely flogging a dead horse—namely, the Finance Act which passed some months ago. The proper time to raise this question was when that Act was before your Lordships.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN: The Act did not come into operation until July 1. That was my reason for waiting.

*THE EARL OF ONSLOW: At any rate the abolition of registration duty on corn has this one advantage, that in the consideration of the fiscal policy of the future we start with a clean slate. I think that the noble Lord will feel inclined if we are to enter into the great inquest of the nation to agree with the Leader of the Opposition that there are a great many more circumstances to be taken into consideration in the price of bread beyond the duty, whether it be one shilling or even more. The most potent factor that affects corn or bread is the visible supply of wheat. Three months, or even a year, would scarcely be enough on which to found a real judgment on such a question as this. Besides that, the cereal year should be considered as a whole, because the price always rises about now, when the old harvest is exhausted and the new harvest has not made itself felt. If the noble Lord will look at the price of bread and wheat in England and compare it with the price in other countries where there are heavy import duties on corn, he will find that it varies considerably, not by any means in accordance with the duty put upon it; and, further, if the noble Lord tries to make out that because the price of bread has not varied during the last three months that is a clear indication that the taking of the tax off and putting it on had no effect, he is, I think, arguing from premises which he is not entitled to use. The noble Lord attacked the Government for taking off this tax, which had been imposed for a specific purpose. The country was engaged in a great war. It was a difficult task for the Chancellor of the Exchequer to know where he was going to get the finance to carry on the war. The income-tax stood at a high figure, and the working classes were not behind any other class in wishing that the war should be carried on to the end. His Majesty's Government thought they would not be doing wrong to ask even the poorest of the population to contribute to the cost of the war. When the war was over the income tax, which was a burden on the wealthy, was reduced, and there was naturally a desire to benefit the poorer classes also. In addition to that there was the question of reducing the cost of the raw material which the farming class uses for feeding herds and flocks. The Government thought that under the circumstances they should abolish the tax altogether and have, as I have said, a clean slate in the inquiry which is going on, and a perfectly open mind, and not keep on any tax which might have prejudged the question.

LORD TWEEDMOUTH: My Lords, even after the speech that has just been delivered, I am presumptious enough to think that I should like to say a word or two with regard to the observations of the noble Lord who has called attention to this question. Let me first say, with regard to the remarks of the noble Earl the Minister for Agriculture, that the late Chancellor of the Exchequer stated very distinctly in the House of Commons that it was not a tax put on for the circumstances of the war, but it was for the purpose of broadening the basis of taxation. My noble friend Lord Camperdown is very much disturbed, apparently, because he cannot find that either the imposition of this tax or the taking of it off has made any difference in the price of bread. I think the noble Earl is in too great a hurry in drawing any conclusion with regard to this particular tax. In a question of this sort, to come to any definite conclusion as to what the effect of such a tax would be by the experience of a single year is absolutely impossible.

There are many considerations. Let me suggest one or two. In the first place, it is possible that the baker has used a less good quality of flour to make his bread with. In that case he would buy his flour cheaper, and keep the price of bread at the same figure. There are also the considerations of the quantity and the quality of the harvests both in this country and in America. It is perfectly well known that last year the wheat produced in this country was not good wheat. It did not make up into flour that was particularly suitable for bread-making. On the other hand, in the United States of America there was a wheat harvest which was abundant in quantity and extremely good in quality. The regular course of trade was that these stocks of wheat should be sent to this country. They were so sent, and I think the noble Earl will find that the price of American wheat in this country was considerably raised last year. The makers of bread here were obliged to have it because it gave a better quality of flour, and it was necessary to have it to mix with the inferior quality of flour grown in this country. There is another thing which has to be taken into consideration in considering the question of price. Last year there was in the United States a great famine in coal, and from this country large quantities of coal were sent to America; the ships that conveyed that coal required to have freights to bring back to this country, and large quantities of wheat were sent back in those ships at a low rate. That is another consideration which should not be overlooked in this matter; and I would advise my noble friend to study these questions a little more closely than he has done, and not be in too great a hurry in drawing conclusions.

*THE EARL OF ONSLOW: In answer to the Question put to me by the noble Earl the Leader of the Opposition, I may say that the prices selected in the Return quoted by the noble Earl who raised this question represent, so far as could be ascertained, the prevailing prices paid at the various places by members of the working classes.

EARL SPENCER: Then they are the retail prices, and practically of no value.

The subject then dropped.

RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION IN BOARD SCHOOLS.

*LORD REAY: My Lords, I rise to ask the President of the Board of Education whether the model By-law No. 3, lately issued by the Board of Education, is in accordance with the provisions of Section 7 of the Education Act, 1870. I regret to have to inflict another educational discussion upon the House, but the noble Marquess is aware of the circumstances which have led to this question being delayed. The by-law to which I wish to call attention allows the parent to withdraw his child from religious instruction without giving any reason for it, and simply by giving notice in writing. He may withdraw him, not merely from the lesson in religious instruction, but from the school altogether. That is the all-important change made in this by-law. Section 7 of the Act of 1870 only allows the child to be withdrawn from instruction in religious subjects in the school, but does not allow him to be removed or withdrawn from the school. That certainly was the interpretation given when the Bill of 1870 was under discussion in the House of Commons, because an Amendment moved by the hon. Member for Birmingham in exactly the same terms of this by-law was strongly objected to by Mr. Forster, who said—

> "He hoped the Committee would keep the clause as it was. It had been drawn after very great care and thought, and the object was to meet what he considered the real wish of the Committee, that whoever objected to his child's religious instruction or presence at religious observance, should be able, without forfeiting any of the other benefits of the school, to withdraw his child from that instruction or observance."

Therefore, it was not at that time the intention of the Government to interfere with the discipline of the school. An hon. Member asked Mr. Forster where the children would be withdrawn to for secular instruction, and Mr. Forster replied that he could not possibly say. In most Government schools there were, he said, class-rooms, and it would be perfectly easy to give the child secular instruction during the time that religious instruction was being given in the rest of the school. Mr. Forster saw no reason why the child should have less teaching than the other children because his parent objected to his receiving religious instruction. The Amendment moved by the Member for Birmingham was rejected by a majority of 244 votes.

I am quite aware that this by-law is permissive, and that it will only be adopted by those education authorities who approve of it; but, at the same time, it represents the policy of the Board of Education. It affects the children of Church of England parents no less than those of Nonconformists. If parents withdraw their children for the purpose of employment, there will be no means of preventing it. I am all the more surprised that the noble Marquess should have authorised this by-law when I recall what he said in the discussion on an Amendment, moved by Lord Lytton when last year's Act was before the House. The object of that Amendment was to permit children, instead of being withdrawn from school, to have religious instruction of a different kind, in accordance with the wishes of their parents. That Amendment the noble Marquess opposed, and he quoted a sentence from a letter which had then recently appeared from the late Sir Joshua Fitch, and which ran—

> "The effect of the adoption of such a plan (*i.e.*, that children should have religious instruction according to their various creeds) on the general discipline of the school and on the authority of the head teacher would be disastrous."

Now, I ask, if that would be disastrous, what will be the effect of a by-law under which you have no guarantee that the children will get religious instruction elsewhere, and which allows children to be withdrawn, without any reason, from all religious instruction whatever.

The principle of the Act of 1870 is that religious instruction forms an integral part of the instruction given in the school. In many cases, as the noble Marquess well knows, certainly in London, the religious instruction which children receive in our schools is the only religious instruction they obtain, and, as regards London Board schools, the withdrawals hitherto have been very few. Teachers naturally attach importance to attendance at school during religious instruction, and if the children cannot be withdrawn from school altogether, the temptation to withdraw them from religious instruction is much less; but with this by-law the temptation to withdraw them becomes very great, and religious instruction will, under this by-law, be considered not to be one of the most important subjects on the time-table, but an appendix to the time-table. Teachers and attendance officers have always done their utmost to secure the punctual attendance of the children at 9 o'clock in the morning, and this punctuality, of course, has a great influence on the regularity of the attendance as well. If you encourage a section of the parents to send their children to school at 9 o'clock, and allow another section to send their children to school between 9 and 9·45, it is quite obvious that the children will get the notion that the real hour for the school meeting is the hour at which secular instruction begins. It will be necessary to make a double registration of attendances; and children who are withdrawn from religious instruction must receive the punctual attendance mark if they arrive at the hour for the commencement of secular instruction. That is the first step in the direction of secularising our schools.

The inspectors of the London School Board have had this new by-law under consideration, and they are of opinion that the adoption of the clause enabling parents to withdraw the children entirely from school during the time of religious instruction would be followed more or less rapidly by the actual withdrawal of many children. This would, they say, especially be the case in the poorer districts, where the sense of parental responsibility is not strong, and where there is a tendency to utilise child labour at every possible opportunity. I cannot believe that the noble Marquess, with his experience, would wish to put the religious instruction at the end of the school meeting. It is quite obvious that you change the whole tone and character of the school if you deprive the children of religious instruction as the first lesson in the morning. Unless religious instruction is given by the headmaster at the beginning of the school, the school really attains a secular character, and is no longer what the Act of 1870 intended it to be.

Here I may, perhaps, say that the London School Board has always attached so much importance to the attendance of children at religious instruction. That was one of the reasons why exception was made in the case of Jewish children. To meet their case a syllabus was issued securing that they should only have instruction in the Old Testament and in Hebrew. They do not receive any instruction in specific Jewish doctrines. The instruction they receive is in absolute conformity with the conditions laid down by the Act of 1870, and, out of the 508 schools, it is only given in seventeen. Jewish children do not receive any preferential treatment. The rule not to require the attendance of Jewish children on Jewish Feast days is in accordance with the Act of 1870, which specifies that children are not to be compelled to attend school on days set apart for religious observance by the religious body to which the parents belong.

I think this is a by-law which the noble Marquess will do well to submit to somewhat closer consideration. Whether it is legal or illegal, it certainly constitutes a fundamental change in our educational system, and I am bound to say that if these are the first fruits of the Act of last year, if that Act has made this concession necessary, then I can hardly conceive a result more disastrous. If this by-law were to be generally carried out it would render nugatory all the results that have been obtained from the wise provisions of the Act of 1870. By a stroke of the pen the Board of Education would be inaugurating an entirely new system of education—a system which was deliberately rejected in 1870 when it was proposed in the House of Commons; a system which certainly was not contemplated (judging by the attitude which the noble Marquess took up on Lord Lytton's Amendment) when the Act of last year was passed, and which is, I believe, opposed to the opinion of the country, which has never sanctioned any step to be taken in the direction of secularising education. I beg to ask the Question standing in my name.

THE LORD BISHOP OF LONDON: My Lords, I desire to express my pleasure in finding myself for the first time in full accord, in an educational debate, with what has fallen from the noble Lord opposite, for whom I have so profound a respect in educational matters. I have no special anxiety that this by-law will affect Church schools, for those in London who take the trouble to send their children to Church schools are parents who will probably see that their children attend at the religious hour. I feel that there is great danger that the by-law may do harm to the religious character of the teaching throughout England. Families to whom every shilling is of importance will be tempted to send children late to school. I also think that religion will be depreciated in the eyes of the children when it no longer occupies any part of their school hours. The by-law is unnecessary. The conscience clause, I rejoice to say, is in active force in the Church schools, as is proved by the statistics of withdrawals, the number of which have increased from 985 in 1887, to 2,386 in 1902, comprising 999 Jewish children and 128 Roman Catholic children. I rejoice in that, because it shows that the conscience clause is really a safeguard. My great fear is that under this by-law we shall have the religious hour stamped out throughout England. We have an object lesson in this matter in what is taking place in Australia and New Zealand, where Churchmen and Nonconformists are united in begging from their Governments some form of religious instruction in their schools for the good of the country. I, therefore, hope that the noble Lord will see some way to modify the by-law, or will be able to send some instruction with it to prevent the religious hour being taken away.

*THE LORD BISHOP OF HEREFORD: My Lords, as an old member of two School Boards and a manager of many schools, I should feel considerable alarm if this by-law were carried into effect throughout the country. I cannot grasp the idea which is at the root of the by-law, or understand on what advice it has been adopted, but I am afraid it will be attended with disastrous results. Poor families will be tempted to keep children from school for the payment that can be got for their services, small tradesmen will keep them at work till the later hour, local quarrels may be got up by combinations of persons hostile to religious teaching in a particular school, increased difficulties will be put in the way of the attendance officers, and teachers will be fretted and hampered by increased irregularity. The effect of this will be that many children will never see the inside of a Bible at all. It has been said that it is practically the first step towards the secularisation of the schools. The mass of the people, I believe, are strongly opposed to anything that would lead to that state of things, and I myself think it would be one of the greatest disasters that could befall the children of the country. I earnestly hope that the noble Marquess will be led to reconsider the advisability of issuing this by-law, and even if it is issued I hope it will not be very largely adopted.

The Lord Bishop of London.

THE LORD BISHOP OF ROCHESTER: My Lords, I join in the expressions of concern and anxiety of the noble Lord opposite in regard to this matter. It appears to me that the operation of this by-law will very seriously interfere, directly in some places and indirectly in others, with what may be called a staple hour of religious instruction throughout the country. I am not sorry of the opportunity of echoing the testimony of the Primate given the other night to the real, though limited, value of the religious instruction which is known as undenominational; and if, as I fear we may, we find the incidental advantages given by the by-law are to be bought at the price of seriously impairing the attendance at this hour of religious instruction, I would say that the price is too heavy to pay. I do not find that there is any difficulty in the poor districts of South London in getting the children to attend school for the hour of religious instruction; the difficulty is met with, curiously enough, in the suburban districts, where people want boots blacked and knives cleaned, and find boys convenient for the purpose. It would be very serious indeed if a tendency so real as that should be assisted by the action of this by-law. It is quite possible that in places the by-law may serve a very valuable purpose. Where the action of the Act of last year really presses hardly on Nonconformists, we should be only too glad to welcome anything which would relieve them from coming under a teaching to which they object. But I hope that the greatest care will be taken in the administration of the by-law, and that its operation will be closely watched.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (The Marquess of LONDONDERRY): My Lords, my first duty is to express my gratitude to the noble Lord opposite for the very kind consideration he showed me in postponing this Question until to-day to suit my convenience. The noble Lord seems to think that this by-law is an infringement of Section 7 of the Act of 1870, but it does not touch that section in the slightest degree. In support of that I can quote the opinion of Dr. Macnamara, M.P., a gentleman who, I think, will be regarded by noble Lords opposite as an educational expert. Dr. Macnamara writes—

> "The new by-law has been before neither the London School Board nor the School Attendance Committee. My view of it is (1) it is in strict accord with the Act of 1870; (2) its form can, of course, be varied by any local authority, subject to the sanction of the Board of Education; (3) it ought to be hailed with satisfaction as likely, in single-school areas especially, to soften the asperities which have grown up under last year's Act. Lord Londonderry is quite at liberty to quote my opinion for what it is worth."

I have consulted the Attorney-General, and the opinion of the Attorney-General, expressed in my own language, is as follows: Section 74 of the Elementary Education Act, 1870, under which by-laws are made, empowers local authorities to make by-laws subject to the approval of the Board of Education for the purpose, *inter alia* (1) of requiring parents to cause their children to attend school; and (2) of determining the time during which children are so to attend school. The practice of the Education Department and the Board of Education has hitherto been only to approve a by-law which required a child to attend the whole time the school was open (subject to the right of withdrawal from religious instruction); but so far as the question of legality goes there is nothing to prevent a school authority from prescribing a given number of hours or certain days of the week, provided the Board of Education approved such a by-law. A by-law determining that in the case of certain children the time shall be the time of secular instruction only, in no way contravenes Section 74 of the Act of 1870; all that is legally required is that the by-law shall not prevent the withdrawal of the child from religious instruction. This new clause certainly does not do so.

The conscience clause (Section 7 of the Act of 1870) neither requires nor prohibits the attendance of the child at school during the time of religious instruction. All it requires is that his attendance at religious instruction shall not be a condition of his being admitted to or continuing in the school, and that if withdrawn from religious instruction he shall not forfeit the other benefits of the school. It is wrong to say that it is illegal to require that the parents' withdrawal of the child from school during religious instruction shall be in writing. The by-law does not affect this right of withdrawal. If the authority suspects that a parent is asking to withdraw his child on wrong grounds, or that parents are likely to do this, they could require the parent to state that he withdraws his child in order to get religious instruction elswhere, and the authority could, if it chose, frame its by-law so as to grant the withdrawal from the school upon such ground only, and for such purposes only. This would not infringe the conscience clause since it would only bring things back to the state which has prevailed from 1870 to 1903, and would make the child come to school though it would not have to hear the religous instruction.

That is my reply to the legal part of the Question addressed to me by the noble Lord; but there are other points on which I should like to say a few words. It has been objected that parents may make use of the right of withdrawal to get their children away from school during the hours devoted to religious instruction to employ them for their own advantage. But I would remind the noble Lord that the by-law is purely optional. It rests with the local authority to assure itself, before adopting it, that there will be no abuse. The intention of this by-law is to provide facilities for children receiving religious instruction in accordance with the views of their parents, and in places approved by their parents.

While we were drafting the new form of by-law in April this year, we received an application from many schools in Eastbourne exactly on the lines of the proposed by-law. The schools in Eastbourne are mostly Church schools. This is what was proposed:

> "Nonconformist parents will be invited to withdraw their children during the time—9 to 9.40 a.m.—devoted to religious instruction. Arrangements will be made at four different centres, close to the four leading schools, to have religious instruction given to all children who care to come, by four ministers of the Free Churches, from 9 to 9.30. In this way the children will get to the schools by 9.45."

I ought to say that the Vicar of Eastbourne gladly supported the proposal, and I believe that amicable arrangements were come to in the matter. It is to facilitate this kind of thing that the change in the by-law is proposed. Hitherto, under the old by-law, every child was compelled to attend school during the hours of religious instruction, and children for whom exemption from the religious instruction was claimed under the conscience clause had to sit in the school and presumably do some other work. The new by-law will permit such children to have religious instruction elsewhere. In the view of the Board of Education and of the Government, the new form of exemption is a fairer arrangement, and we have every hope that it will be properly used and not abused. I fully agree with the right rev. Prelates that there is a danger of its being abused, but we have, I hope, adopted safeguards. I wish to say, in the first place, that no authority need adopt the new form of by-law unless it pleases; secondly, that a county authority can adopt it for some of the villages in its area and not for others, if it thinks desirable; and, thirdly, that it can revert to the old form at any time if it finds on experience that it is being abused. The right rev. Prelate, the Bishop of Hereford, stated that in his opinion children would lose religious instruction under this new by-law. I cannot think that any harm will be done to children whose parents desire that they should receive this instruction.

*THE LORD BISHOP OF HEREFORD: I should like to ask the noble Marquess whether the by-law requires that the parents must say that the withdrawal is for the purpose of religious instruction elsewhere.

The Marquess of Londonderry.

THE MARQUESS OF LONDONDERRY: No. But in sending out copies of the new form of by-law for the consideration of local authorities, we are warning them of the possible danger of its being abused, and are sending with every copy of the by-law a circular signed by Mr. Morant, the Permanent Secretary of the Board of Education, to the following effect—

> "Board of Education,
>
> "Whitehall, S.W.
>
> "Sir, in forwarding the enclosed copy of a form of by-laws suggested for the use of Local Authorities, the Board of Education desire me to call attention to the importance of watching the operation of Section 3, as to the time of attendance, in the event of your Council considering it advisable to adopt that portion of the section which enables a parent, after notification in writing, to withdraw a child from school during the time given to religious instruction.
>
> "In suggesting the addition of this provision to the terms of the by-law hitherto in general use the Board have in view the importance of meeting the conscientious objections of parents who desire their children to receive religious instruction elsewhere than at the school.
>
> "If however, it should appear that permission for non-attendance is demanded and used for other purposes, and that the children for whom this permission is asked are allowed to remain idle or are employed in secular avocations, the Board would be prepared to approve proposals from Local Authorities who desired either to withdraw this privilege by reverting to the by-law in its earlier form, or to impose such conditions as would prevent its abuse.
>
> "I am, your obedient servant,
>
> "ROBERT L. MORANT."

We believe that this by-law will give facilities for carrying out the intention of the Act of 1870, and that the policy of the by-law certainly does not contravene that Act. We believe that it will be the means of bringing about a better system of organisation with regard to religious instruction in schools, and that it will remove the possibility of what is called proselytizing of children. In making arrangements for religious instruction to be given according to the views of the parents, we believe that we are acting fairly to all denominations and all classes; and in response to the enquiry of the noble Lord, we believe that we are acting within our legal right in inserting this by-law, and we trust that, safeguarded as it is, it may be attended with satisfactory results.

BILLS OF EXCHANGE ACT, 1882, AMENDMENT BILL (H.L.)

[SECOND READING.]

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read—

The LORD CHANCELLOR (The Earl of HALSBURY): My Lords, the object of this Bill is to amend Section 82 of the Act of 1882, which was intended to protect bankers who had received in good faith and without negligence cheques on behalf of their customers. That section was supposed to be a complete protection to bankers, but a recent case in the Courts turned on the point of a banker allowing his customer to draw money before he actually received payment of the cheque, and it was held that he was then collecting it for himself and not for his customer. This Bill provides that—

> "A banker receives payment of a crossed cheque for a customer within the meaning of section eighty-two of the Bills of Exchange Act, 1882, notwithstanding that he credits his customer's account with the amount of the cheque before receiving payment thereof."

Moved, that the Bill be now read 2a—(*The Lord Chancellor.*)

On Question, Bill read 2a (according to order), and committed to a Committee of the whole House on Monday next.

PISTOLS BILL.

Read 3a (according to order), with the Amendments. A further Amendment made; Bill passed, and returned to the Commons.

PUBLIC OFFICES (DUBLIN) BILL.

Read 3a (according to order), and passed.

MILITARY LANDS BILL.

Read 3a (according to order), with the Amendment, and passed, and returned to the Commons.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR AND THE LAW CLERKS.

LORD MONKSWELL: In accordance with the notice standing in my name on the Paper, I beg to ask the Lord Chancellor whether there is any foundation for the report that he has recently invited 100 law clerks to resign.

THE LORD CHANCELLOR: There is not the smallest foundation for it. In a conversation between the noble Lord and myself, I told him that it was grotesquely inaccurate. I cannot help saying that it is not creditable to a certain portion of the Press that these statements should be made, apparently with the purpose of founding some commentaries or severe observations against noble Lords and others. I daresay that the person who invented this little suggestion only thought, perhaps, of reflecting on others. He did not seem to consider that he was reflecting also on a very hard-working, very diligent, and very efficient body of public servants when he suggested that 100 of them were being withdrawn by reason of their inefficiency. There is not the smallest foundation for the suggestion. I agree with the Lord Chief Justice in saying that I have no reason to suppose there is any lack of efficiency or diligence or energy in the public Department to which I have referred; and I can only regret that such statements are made apparently with no responsibility. Although some newspapers have had no complicity in the invention, I do not find that the persons who invented these things are made responsible even to those who accept their information. I regret that such statements can be made without the persons who invented them being made responsible for their untruths.

House adjourned at five minutes past Seven o'clock, to Monday next, a quarter past Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Friday, 31*st July*, 1903.

(The House met at Twelve of the Clock.)

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO COMPLIED WITH).

Mr. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, viz: Hastings Harbour Bill [Lords.]

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time.

Carmarthenshire Electric Power Bill [Lords]—Lords, reason for disagreeing to one of the Commons' Amendments to the Bill considered:—Resolved, That this House doth not insist on the Amendment to which the Lords have disagreed:—(*The Chairman of Ways and Means.*)

Bath Corporation Water Bill [Lords]; Dublin, Wicklow, and Wexford Railway Bill. Lords' Amendments considered, and agreed to.

Bristol Corporation Bill [Lords] (King's Consent signified)—Read the third time, and passed, with Amendments.

Kip's Patents Bill [Lords];—Read the third time, and passed, with Amendments.

Maryport Harbour Bill [Lords] King's Consent signified)—Read the third time, and passed, with Amendments.

Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Tramways Bill [Lords]; West Bromwich Corporation Bill [Lords]; Read the third time, and passed, with Amendments.

Hove, Worthing, and District Tramways Bill [Lords], (by Order); South Eastern and London, Chatham, and Dover Railways Bill [Lords], (by Order); Read the third time, and passed, with Amendments.

Irvine and District Water Board Confirmation Bill [Lords]—Read the third time, and passed, without Amendment.

Wick and Pulteney Harbours Order Confirmation Bill—Read the third time, and passed.

Gas and Water Orders Confirmation Bill [Lords]; Education Board Provisional Order Confirmation (London) Bill [Lords]; As amended, considered; to be read the third time upon Monday next.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have agreed to, Metropolitan Streets Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 8) Bill, without Amendment.

London County Council (Tramways and Improvements Bill; London County Council (Money) Bill; South Shields Corporation Bill; Beckenham Urban District Council Bill, with Amendments.

Amendments to, Exeter Corporation Bill [Lords]; Barry Railway Bill [Lords]; Dewsbury, Batley, and Birstal Tramways Bill [Lords]; Worthing Corporation Tramways Bill [Lords], without Amendment.

That they have passed a Bill, intituled, "An Act to continue and amend The Light Railways Act, 1896." [Light Railways Bill [Lords.]

And also a Bill, intituled, "An Act to empower the Urban District Council of Willesden to sell their generating station at Willesden to the North Metropolitan Electric Power Supply Company; to confer further powers upon that company; and for other purposes." [North Metropolitan Electric Power Supply Bill [Lords.]

North Metropolitan Electric Power Supply Bill [Lords]. Read the first time, and referred to the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills.

PETITION.

LICENSING (SCOTLAND) ACTS AMENDMENT BILL.

Petition from Lerwick, for alteration; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

BOARD OF EDUCATION (GENERAL REPORTS).

Copy presented, of General Reports of His Majesty's Inspectors on Elementary Schools and Training Colleges for the year 1902 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

DIRECTORY OF INDUSTRIAL ASSOCIATIONS.

Copy presented, of Directory of Industrial Associations in the United Kingdom in 1903 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

LIGHT LOAD LINE.

Copy presented, of Papers showing the action taken by the Board of Trade with regard to certain recommendations made by the Select Committee of the House of Lords on Light Load Line [by ommand]; to lie upon the Table.

RAILWAY RETURNS.

Copy presented, of Returns of the Capital, Traffic Receipts, and Working Expenditure, etc., of the Railway Companies of the United Kingdom for the year 1902 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

BRITISH VESSELS SOLD TO FOREIGNERS.

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 22nd July; *Mr. Runciman*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. No. 298.]

BRITISH COLONIES (DUTIES ON IMPORTS.)

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 21st July; *Mr. Alfred Davies*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 299.]

QUEEN'S COLLEGE (BELFAST).

Copy presented, of Annual Report of the President for 1902–3 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

MARRIAGES, BIRTHS, AND DEATHS (IRELAND).

Copy presented, of thirty-ninth Annual Report of the Registrar-General of Marriages, Births, and Deaths in Ireland, 1902 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

FISHERIES (IRELAND).

Copy presented, of Report of the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction for Ireland on the Sea and Inland Fisheries of Ireland for 1902. Part I. General Report [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

LOCAL TAXATION RETURNS (ENGLAND).

Copy presented, of the Annual Local Taxation Returns for 1901–2 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 300.]

EAST INDIA (RAILWAYS).

Copy presented, of Report on the administration and working of Indian Railways, by Thomas Robertson, C.V.O., Special Commissioner for Indian Railways [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

NAVY (HEALTH).

Copy presented, of Statistical Report of the Health of the Navy for the year 1902 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 301.]

NAVAL PRIZE MONEY.

Account presented, showing the Receipt and Expenditure of Naval Prize, Bounty, Salvage and other Moneys between the 1st April, 1902, and 31st March, 1903 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 302.]

TAXES AND IMPOSTS.

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 12th May; *Mr. Goddard*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 303.]

PUBLIC WORKS LOANS (REMISSION OF DEBT.)

Committee to consider of authorising the Remission of a certain Debt due to the Public Works Loan Commissioners in pursuance of any Act of the present session relating to Local Loans (King's Recommendation signified), upon Monday next.—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS. CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Employment of Kaffirs on Transvaal Railways.

SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether he has approved of a resolution reported to have been passed by the Intercolonial or

Railway Extension Council in the Transvaal, on 8th July, limiting the number of Kaffirs to be employed in railway construction to 10,000, and also of the resolution as to the exclusion of Kaffir labour recruited north of Pretoria already announced.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Chamberlain.*) The first resolution referred to I have not yet received. With regard to the second resolution my answer to the right hon. Member on 21st July † referred him to Resolution XII of the Railway Extension Conference, which is to be found at page 87 of Cd. 1552, and is worded as follows—

> "This Conference is of opinion that in the construction of new lines every care should be taken not to impair the labour supply of the mines, and that when any line is given to a contractor it should, if necessary, be made a condition of the contract that no aboriginal natives of South Africa should be employed unless belonging to tribes which are known to be averse to underground labour."

I see no objection to this resolution, but I am not so far aware that a resolution has been passed for the exclusion of all Kaffir labour recruited north of Pretoria, without reference to its character, in the case of contracts for the railways.

British Exports to Canada.

MR. SEELY (Lincoln): To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies what percentage of the total imports into Canada came from the United Kingdom in the years 1897 and 1902 respectively.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Chamberlain.*) According to the latest Annual Report of the Department of Trade and Commerce of Canada the percentage of the total imports for consumption of merchandise into Canada from the United Kingdom in the years 1897 to 1902 was as follows:—Year ended 30th June, 1897, 27·58; year ended 30th June, 1898, 25·36; year ended 30th June, 1899, 24·72; year ended 30th June, 1900, 25·66; year ended 30th June, 1901, 24·10; year ended 30th June, 1902, 24·95.

Staff of Ecclesiastical Commission—Salaries and Pensions.

MR. HUMPHREYS-OWEN (Montgomeryshire): To ask the hon. Member for West Salford, as Church Estates Commissioner, if he will say what is the present staff of the Ecclesiastical Commission; by whom the staff are appointed, and by whom the salaries payable to its members are determined; and what has been the aggregate amount spent annually by the Commissioners in salaries and pensions respectively during the three years last past.

(*Answered by Mr. Lees Knowles.*) Having been a member of the Joint Committee on Queen Anne's Bounty in 1901, the hon. Gentleman doubtless remembers that a complete statement of the numbers and salaries of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners' staff was printed as Appendix C to the Report (with Evidence) of that Committee (Parliamentary Paper, No. 174, of session 1901). With the exception that a solicitor has been added at a salary of £400 to do within the office the legal work in connection with the Church Building Acts which was formerly transacted by a firm of solicitors outside, the appointments on the staff are substantially unaltered. Clerks and officials, other than those on the temporary staff, are appointed upon certificates of the Civil Service Commissioners after open competitive examination, except in those few cases in which professional qualifications are required, and it is necessary to take advantage of Clause 7 of the Order in Council of 4 June 1870 relating to appointments in the Civil Service. The numbers and salaries of the various classes of clerks and officials are determined by the Treasury. The amounts spent by the Commissioners in salaries and wages and pensions during their last three financial years have been as follows:—Year ending 31 October 1900, salaries, etc., £24,244 2s. 10d., pensions £7,330 4s. 11d.; year ending 31 October 1901, salaries, etc., £23,426 4s. 7d., pensions £7,482 7s. 7d.; year ending 31 October 1902, salaries, etc., £23,999 6s. 7d., pensions £8,004 10s. 9d.

Legal Expenses of Ecclesiastical Commissioners.

Mr. HUMPHREYS-OWEN: To ask the hon. Member for West Salford, as Church Estates Commissioner, what were the main items in the legal expenses of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners for the year 1902.

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† See (4) *Debates* cxxv., 1311.

(*Answered by Mr. Lees Knowles.*) The legal expenses amounting to £10,136 10s. appearing in the Common Fund Account of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners for the year preceding 1 November 1902, were incurred, as to £1,603 16s. 2d. in respect of sales and exchanges of properties, as to £1,085 14s. 8d. in respect of purchases, and as to £7,446 19s. 2d. in respect of church building and various matters (including £2,700 in opposing, in the interests of the Commissioners' Estates, certain Bills in Parliament, of which there were an exceptionally large number in that year), and £2,216 17s. 4d. in costs of litigation with a railway company in respect of questions affecting mineral rights of large pecuniary value.

Population of Dioceses of Worcester and Birmingham.

MR. HUMPHREYS-OWEN: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what is approximately the present population of the diocese of Worcester; and what population it is proposed in the Bishoprics of Southwark and Birmingham Bill to assign to the bishopric of Birmingham.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers Douglas.*) According to the Census Returns for 1901 the population of the diocese of Worcester is 1,398,240. The population of the area proposed to be formed into the new diocese of Birmingham is about 850,000. This number includes about 65,000 persons now in the diocese of Lichfield.

Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister in British East Africa.

MR. TALBOT (Oxford University): To ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether marriage with the sister or niece of a deceased wife has been recently legalised in the British East African Protectorate; and, if so, upon what grounds this step has been taken.

(*Answered by Lord Cranborne*). The marriage law prevailing in the Protectorates administered by the Colonial Office was recently adopted as a whole for British East Africa. The provisions to which my right hon. friend refers are, it appears, included in that law, but I was not aware of it until his Question called my attention to the fact.

Taxation, and Trade of United Kingdom.

SIR JOHN COLOMB (Great Yarmouth): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he can state the amount per head of population of Imperial and local taxation respectively, and also of the total value of the trade of the United Kingdom for each of the years 1882 and 1902, excluding taxes raised for the purposes of the war in South Africa.

(*Answered by Mr. Ritchie.*) The amount per head of population of Imperial taxation is estimated to have been as follows: 1882–3, £2 1s. 8d.; 1902–3 (omitting revenue estimated to have been devoted to war purposes), £2 15s. 11d. The amount of local rates in the United Kingdom per head of population is estimated to have been:—1882–3, 17s. 3d.; 1899–1900 (figures for later year not yet available), £1 3s. 3d. I cannot give any estimate of the total trade (which would of course include the home trade) of the United Kingdom, but the total value of imports and exports per head of population was:—1882, £20 8s. 10d.; 1902, £20 18s. 5d. These last figures are shown for each year in the Statistical Abstract.

Yield of Income Tax.

SIR EDGAR VINCENT (Exeter): To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if he can state the amount which one penny on the Income Tax has brought in in each of the following years—1880, 1890, 1900, and 1902, the figures for each year being corrected to an identical basis.

(*Answered by Mr. Ritchie.*) The actual figures in round thousands have been as follows:—Year to 5th April 1880, £1,846,000; 1890, £2,141,000; 1900, £2,353,000; 1902, £2,531,000. In order to adjust the figures of 1900 and 1902 to the same basis as those of 1880 and 1890, it would be necessary to take into account the amount of income relieved from taxation by the Finance Acts of 1894 and 1898, either by way of exemption or abatement. It is not possible to make any accurate estimate of the amount relieved by way of exemption, I can only say that it has been considerable. But an estimate can be made of the income relieved by way of abatement. The following statement shows the relief allowed in each of the years under the heads referred to:—1880, 1890, Abatements, £120 on incomes from £150 to £400; 1900, 1902, £160 on incomes exceeding £160 but not exceeding £400; £150 on incomes exceeding £400 but not exceeeding £500; £120 on incomes exceeding £500 but not exceeding £600, and £70 on incomes exceeding £600 but not exceeding £700. In respect of repairs: One-eighth of the annual value of "lands," one-sixth of the annual value of "houses." Under these several heads income which would have paid tax in 1880 and 1890 has in 1900 and 1902 been relieved from tax to the following amounts per penny:—1899–1900, £235,000; 1901–1902, £259,000. Accordingly the actual figures as given above would, if adjusted in respect of abatements, only stand as follows:—Year to 5th April, 1880, £1,846,000; 1890, £2,141,000; 1900, £2,588,000; 1902, £2,790,000. If the additional amount of income relieved by exemption could be calculated, a further substantial addition would be required on the figures of the two later years.

Comparative Growth of Private Wealth in England, France, and Germany.

Sir EDGAR VINCENT: To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if he can give figures bearing upon the comparative growth of private wealth in England, France, and Germany since 1880, as indicated by Income Tax Returns, Death Duty Returns, and similar standards.

(*Answered by Mr. Ritchie.*) I am afraid there are no statistics in the possession of the Treasury upon which I could venture to frame an estimate of the growth of wealth in France and Germany. As regards the United Kingdom, full statistics for recent years were given in the last Report of the Board of Inland Revenue, and will be continued in their forthcoming Report, as to income and as to the capital value of property passing on death; and it would be possible to give a special Return for the purpose of comparison with the year 1880, or any other year prior to the decennial period covered by the Tables of the Report. But the figures of property passing on death can only be given at the full amount for the period subsequent to the Finance Act, 1894. Prior to that the capital value of real property was not fully disclosed.

Registration of School Teachers.

Sir EDGAR VINCENT: To ask the Secretary to the Board of Education if he will furnish a Return showing how many persons have become registered teachers under Form $\frac{\text{No. 2.}}{\text{T.R.C.}}$, Regulation 5, Section 2A; what was the qualification of each one so registered which, in the opinion of the Council, has qualified the person to be so registered; and how it happens that the students of a training college under Government inspection are registered, but the principals who trained them cannot be so without submitting to an examination.

(*Answered by Sir William Anson.*) The Board are prepared to grant the Return of the persons registered under Regulation 5 (2) (a) asked for in the first part of the Question. A person who becomes a student in a training college under Government inspection is not thereby qualified to be placed on the register. The principal of a training college may be placed on the register without examination if he fulfils the conditions of Regulations 4 or 5 (2).

Average Prices of Wheat at Chicago and Buenos Ayres.

Colonel LONG (Worcestershire, Evesham): To ask the President of the Board of Trade what was the average price of wheat per quarter taking 500 lbs. to the quarter at Chicago, United States, and Buenos Ayres, Argentina, in 1901 and 1902.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) The means of the monthly quotations of the prices of No. 1 Northern Spring Wheat at Chicago, as published in the "Crop Reporter" issued by the United States Department of Agriculture, give an annual average for 1901 of $72\frac{1}{96}$ cent. per bushel, and for 1902 of $74\frac{125}{192}$ cent.

per bushel. Taking the bushel as equal to 60 lbs., the price of a quarter of 500 lbs. on this basis would have been 25s. in 1901, and 25s. 11d. in 1902. I have no information as to the prices at Buenos Ayres.

Manufactured Articles Exported from United Kingdom, France and Germany and United States.

MR. COURTENAY WARNER (Staffordshire, Lichfield): To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he can give the statistics of the total manufactured articles exported from the United Kingdom, France, Germany, and the United States of Americafrom 1885 to 1902, corresponding as nearly as possible to the articles enumerated in Class 3 in the summaries of the Trade and Navigation Accounts published by the Board of Trade, showing also the amount per head of the population in each case.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) The hon. Member will find such particulars as are available on this subject in the latest issue of the Statistical Abstract for Foreign Countries ([Cd. 1237] of 1902.)

Imports of Manufactured Articles.

MR. REA (Gloucester): To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he can give statistics of the imports of articles wholly or mainly manufactured, imported into, and retained for consumption in the United Kingdom from 1885 to 1902.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) Figures of the importation of manufactured and partly manufactured goods into United Kingdom from 1885 to 1902 could be given, but it is unlikely that the home consumption of such goods can be specified.

Imports of Manufactured Articles into France, Germany, and United States.

MR. TOULMIN (Lancashire, Bury): To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he can give statistics of the manufactured articles imported into France, Germany, and the United States of America from 1885 to 1902, corresponding as nearly as possible to the articles enumerated in Class 3in the Summaries of the Trade and Navigation Accounts published by the Board of Trade.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) The hon. Member will find such particulars as are available on this subject in the latest issue of the "Statistical Abstract for Foreign Countries" (Cd. 1237, of 1902.)

Accounts of General Lighthouse Fund.

SIR ROBERT ROPNER (Stockton): To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether he can arrange for the accounts of the General Lighthouse Fund for the year ending 31st March, 1903, to be laid upon the Table of the House before the end of the session.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) The accounts cannot be presented to Parliament until the certificate of the Comptroller and the Auditor-General has been obtained, and this will probably not be received until November.

Education Act, 1902—Issue of Regulations under Section 23 (4).

SIR CHARLES DILKE: To ask the President of the Local Government Board when he is likely to issue regulations, under Section 23 (4) of the Education Act, 1902, prescribing the mode in which the amount produced by rates under the Act shall be estimated.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) I have been in communication on this subject with the associations representing the various local authorities concerned. One of these associations have not yet furnished me with their final observations, but I expect to receive them in a day or two. I hope to be in a position to issue the regulations very shortly.

Rateable Value of England and Wales.

MR. HUMPHREYS-OWEN: To ask the President of the Local Government Board, if he will state the rateable value of England and Wales in each of the years 1870-1871, 1880–1881, 1890–1891, and 1900-1901.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) It appears from Part I. of the last issued Local Taxation Returns that the rateable value of England and Wales, according to the Poor Rate Valuation, was at the commencement of the years referred to as follows—

Year 1870–1871	Rateable Value,	£104,405,304
,, 1880–1881	,,	£135,645,473
,, 1890–1891	,,	£152,116,008
,, 1900–1901	,,	£180,406,420

Worsted Trade—Accidents from Flying Shuttles.

SIR CHARLES DILKE: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, whether his attention has been called to the recent frequency of accidents from flying shuttles in the worsted trade in Bradford; and whether he has any official information showing why the precautions which have reduced the frequency of flying shuttle accidents in Lancashire appear not yet to have had that effect on certain branches of the worsted trade; and what steps he proposes to take.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Akers Douglas.*) There have been eighteen shuttle accidents this year in the worsted trade in the Bradford district; all, happily, as I understand, of a slight character. I am aware that this number indicates a considerable increase on last year; but the figures are apt to fluctuate considerably. Moreover, though all the shuttles in the worsted-weaving districts are well guarded with guards similar to those used in the cotton districts, the differences in the material under manufacture render it difficult to make the guards equally effective. The matter will continue to receive the attention of the inspectors.

Sale of Addington Park.

MR. MOON (St. Pancras, N.): To ask the hon. Member for West Salford, as Church Estates Commissioner, what was the amount which came to the hands of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners from the sale of Addington, and what was the amount applied in providing an Archiepiscopal Palace at Canterbury.

(*Answered by Mr. Lees Knowles.*) As the hon. Member for Montgomeryshire was informed, in reply to a Question put by him on the 4th June last year,† Addington Park was sold for £45,000. With the addition of the amount (£2,371 7s.) paid over by the Archbishop in respect of dilapidations accrued before the sale the total proceeds coming into the hands of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners was £47,371 7s. which was reduced to £46,006 18s. 11d. by the discharge of a small mortgage created in respect of certain improvements at Addington. The cost of the site for the new Archiepiscopal Palace at Canterbury and the erection of the building has been £29,176 11s. 1d.

Pace of Motor Mails.

MR. CATHCART WASON (Orkney and Shetland): To ask the Postmaster-General if instructions will be given to drivers of motor mails to drive at a reasonable pace, especially round corners and across pavements.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) The drivers of motor-mail vans in London have been cautioned in the sense desired by the hon. Member.

Increments for Postal Knowledge—Case of Telegraphist at Shrewsbury.

MR. SCHWANN (Manchester, N.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he will explain why a telegraphist at Shrewsbury has been refused the increment for postal knowledge, in view of the fact that his case is similar to that of other telegraphists appointed at amalgamated offices and transferred to Shrewsbury, and that four other clerks have had this increment.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) If the hon. Member will furnish the name of the officer to whom he refers I will inquire about the matter.

Spiddal (Connemara) Petty Sessions—Attendance of Magistrates.

MR. O'MALLEY (Galway, Connemara): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state how often within the last two years were the Spiddal (Connemara) Petty Sessions adjourned owing to the fact that there were no magistrates in attendance; and whether in view of the inconvenience to the public of these adjournments, he will consider the advisability of appointing local justices who will attend at the Petty Sessions Courts.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cviii., 1397.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) The Petty Sessions at Spiddal lapsed on two occasions during the past two years owing to the non-attendance of justices. Applications for appointment to the commission of the peace should be addressed to the Lieutenant of the county.

Case of Ellen Madigan.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can state the circumstances under which an old woman of eighty-three years of age, of the name of Ellen Madigan, is now in Limerick Prison; and what steps he proposes to take in the matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) The committal of Mrs. Madigan, whose age is eighty years, was for contempt of Court on a writ of attachment issued by the Vice-Chancellor. The contempt consisted in her failure as administratrix of the will of John Madigan to render an account of her dealings with the estate. The matter is not one in which the Executive can intervene.

Belturbet Urban Council—Surcharge of Rent Collector Thomas Dolan.

MR. J. P. FARRELL (Longford, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the case of rent collector Thomas Dolan, of Belturbet Urban Council, who has been surcharged by the Local Government auditor in the sum of £206 14s.; whether he is aware that no reasons have been given for this surcharge, and that Mr. Dolan has been for over thirty years the collector of rents in the township, during which no charge has ever been brought against him; and, seeing that the auditor gave the collector no opportunity for defence, and that Mr. Dolan has now lodged over £200 of arrears of rents, and having regard to his circumstances, whether the Local Government Board will allow him personally to appear before them in support of an appeal for its remission.

(*Answered by Mr Wyndham.*) My right hon. friend the Attorney-General replied to a similar Question by the hon. Member on the 21st instant.† He pointed out that the order of the Local Government Board confirming this surcharge was the subject of proceedings in the King's Bench Division, and that in these circumstances the matter cannot be further discussed at present.

Increase of Police Force at Leixlip.

MR. LEAMY (Kildare, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if the police force in Leixlip has been increased by four men; and, if so, why, and on whom will the additional expense fall.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) There has been no permanent addition to the local force. The cost of the four men, who have now returned to their stations, will be paid from the Constabulary Vote.

Area of Ground and Duration of September Manœuvres.

MR. CHARLES HOBHOUSE (Bristol, E.) To ask the Secretary of State for War, whether he can give any information as to the area of the manœuvre ground in September, giving the extreme points east and west, the numbers of troops to be employed, and the duration of the operations.

(*Answered by Mr Secretary Brodrick.*) The area of the manœuvre ground comprises all Oxfordshire and Berkshire, Hampshire, excluding the New Forest and the Isle of Wight, and the northern portion of Wiltshire, thus lying between Windsor on the east, Bradford-on-Avon on the west, Banbury on the north, and Portsmouth on the south. The troops will be taken from the 1st and 2nd Army Corps. The operations will be for the period of a week, and will probably begin on 6th September.

Cotton Trade and Fiscal Reform.

SIR WILLIAM HOLLAND (Yorkshire, W.R., Rotherham): To ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether his attention has been directed to a resolution passed at the recent joint conference of the Cotton Employers Parliamentary Association and the United Textile Factory Operatives Association, in which the conference expressed its conviction that the cotton industry of the United

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxxv., 1318.

Kingdom owed its pre-eminence to the policy of free trade and pledged itself to resist proposals to impose taxes upon food or raw materials; and whether, in view of the importance of this industry in Lancashire and of the number of persons involved in it, the Government will, in the course of their inquiry into our fiscal system, take evidence upon its position and requirements from those who are engaged in it as employers and operatives.

(*Answered by Mr. A. J. Balfour.*) I have seen the resolution referred to. I have nothing to add to the answers I have given in reference to the inclusion or the exclusion of particular subjects of the inquiry. Of course any observations from the persons named in the Question will be carefully considered.

Transfer of Crown Land to Lord Penrhyn.

MR. LEVY (Leicestershire, Loughborough): To ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether his attention has been directed to a statement made by the legal adviser of Lord Penrhyn at the Bangor Police Court a few days since, to the effect that in 1858 the Crown transferred to Lord Penrhyn, in the vicinity of Bethesda, 6,129 acres of what has always been regarded as common land; if so, can he state whether such land was the property of the Crown; if so, under what circumstances and for what consideration the transfer was made; whether any conditions as to minerals were imposed; and if he will cause a copy of the transfer deed to be placed in the Library of the House for reference.

(*Answered by Mr. A. J. Balfour.*) Colonel Pennant, to whom the sale in 1858 was made, was lessee of the Crown lordship of Uchaf under a lease granted in 1817, which came to an end about 1862. The waste land in question was considered to form part of that lordship. The Commissioners of Woods of that day seem to have considered it desirable to sell the Crown right of soil for the purpose of procuring a considerable sum of money for what was, in their opinion, valueless to the Crown. They considered the minerals might turn out to be of value, and there had been disputes about the Crown's rights in the various parts of the lordship of Uchaf and as to encroachments. The sale had the effect of putting the Crown's title to the minerals beyond controversy or risk of encroachment. It is unusual to publish copies of title deeds such as the conveyance of 1858, but any application for leave to see a copy of it at the Office of Woods will be duly considered.

IRISH DEVELOPMENT GRANT BILL.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[MR. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith) in the Chair.]

Clause 1—

Amendment proposed—

"In page 1, line 5, to leave out from the words 'shall be,' to end of line 6, and insert the words 'paid out of money to be provided by Parliament.'"—(*Mr. Wyndham.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the clause."

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (King's Lynn) said the Amendment now proposed completely changed the character of the Bill. As originally introduced it was open to the gravest constitutional and financial objections, but certainly the major part of those objections would now be removed. Instead of being placed as a permanent charge on the Consolidated Fund, and withdrawn from the control of Parliament, the grant was now to be placed on the Estimates. To enable that to be done an Act of Parliament was not required in the natural course of things, and he assumed the necessity in this case was due to the framework of the Land Bill. But while the Bill was less objectionable than before, it now made an addition to a series of Estimates which was open to serious criticism. It introduced, in fact, a large new grant-in-aid. Grants-in-aid, when small and for specific purposes, such as those for the National Gallery and certain scientific societies, were not very objectionable; they afforded a convenient method of granting public money. But of late years they had enormously increased, notwithstanding the protests of the Public

Accounts Committee and the recommendations of the Treasury. Last year the grants-in-aid amounted to £3,600,000, and in addition to that there was £4,000,000 for the Transvaal. The objection to the system was that the money was withdrawn from all the safeguards provided by practice and the Constitution, and handed over to a Department or an individual, without any question being asked, to be expended practically without control. He regretted the Chief Secretary had found it necessary to resort to this form of Estimate, but he acknowledged the readiness with which the right hon. Gentleman had entertained the objections held to the original form of the Bill.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY TO THE LORD-LIEUTENANT OF IRELAND (Mr. WYNDHAM, Dover) said the circumstances of Ireland were peculiar, and unless recourse were had either to a charge on the Consolidated Fund—the method which he had abandoned—or to a grant-in-aid, Ireland would suffer, and suffer gravely. Last year a large sum was allocated in England to purposes which in that country were ripe for assistance, and, unless an equivalent was secured, Ireland would for some years lose aid which was timely, and indeed overdue. It was, in the first place, to protect Ireland from that loss, a loss which in past years she had frequently had to suffer, that he had felt it his duty to recommend the Committee to adopt a fiscal method which, he admitted, was peculiar, but which was essential in the peculiar needs and necessities of Ireland.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.) thought it a good thing for Ireland that the Chief Secretary had introduced this Bill, because, although as the money was to be placed on the Estimates the measure was not in one sense necessary, yet it made it clear for all time that Ireland was entitled to this grant, whereas if the Bill were not in existence Ireland would probably in the future, as had happened in the past, be done out of a great deal of the money to which she was justly entitled. The Amendment now moved undoubtedly carried out the pledge of the right hon. Gentleman and gave to the Irish Members a voice in the allocation of the money, and at the same time made it perfectly clear that if the total sum was not expended in any year the unexpended balances would accumulate, and be safeguarded for Irish purposes.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL (Tyrone, S.) said that the Bill marked a new departure, but so far from objecting to it he desired to see it carried further. In the proposal he detected the germ of an Irish Exchequer—the reservation of Irish money for Irish purposes. The only drawback was that it placed in the hands of Dublin Castle a purse into which the Irish Government could dip for any purpose they chose. However, he had weighed the advantages and disadvantages of the scheme, and he thought the former certainly outweighed the latter.

SIR BRAMPTON GURDON (Norfolk, N.) thoroughly sympathised with the remarks of the hon. Member for King's Lynn with regard to grants-in-aid: they constituted a most inconvenient and objectionable form of giving public money. As to the proposal in the Bill, if money was to be given and set apart in this way for Irish purposes, it would be necessary to give Ireland a governing body to decide how the money should be spent. The continuation of this policy must end in Home Rule.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES asked whether the Chancellor of the Exchequer would give his attention to the general system of grants-in-aid.

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. RITCHIE, Croydon) said he entirely sympathised with the view expressed by the Treasury that grants-in-aid ought to be carefully watched, and made only for specific objects. This particular case, however, was very exceptional, and it would only lead to gross extravagance if the authorities were compelled to spend the whole of the money within the year. It was really in the interests of economy, though he quite admitted it was a considerable departure from the usual practice.

Question put, and negatived.

Question, "That those words be there inserted in the clause," put, and agreed to.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 1, line 12, after the word 'shall,' to insert the words 'subject to the provisions of any Act of the present session relating to Irish land purchase.'"—(*Mr. Wyndham.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND said that whatever might be said about Trinity College there could only be one feeling in regard to the congested districts.

MR. KILBRIDE (Kildare, S.) pointed out that in the case of Scotland, as the number of children attending school increased the amount of the equivalent grant would also increase. Accordingly, he was not so sure that by the present grant Ireland was being treated fairly, and Irish children would be worse off than Scotch children, because this Bill stereotyped the sum at £185,000 per annum. If the number of children attending school in Ireland increased, they would consequently get less per child instead of more, as was the case in this country. If his contention showed to the Chancellor of the Exchequer any inequality of treatment, he hoped it would induce the right hon. Gentleman, at this stage, to put the matter right before the Bill was passed, and thus secure that Irish children would not be placed at any disadvantage.

MR. CALDWELL (Lanarkshire, Mid) said that this point also related to Scotland. England got the grant under the Act of last year, and it was based upon so much per child. Consequently, it would increase every year if the number of children attending school increased. He thought that on this principle Ireland ought to have her grant arranged to increase automatically like England, and provision should be made to accomplish this. Otherwise next year they would have a larger sum while Ireland would be limited to the stereotyped amount of £185,000. This inequality would be sure to give rise to a discussion on the Estimates every year. He thought it would be a great mistake now to put Ireland in an inferior position. When they were drawing the money out of the Consolidated Fund, and applying it to certain purposes, he could understand that something might be said in favour of a fixed amount instead of a variable sum, but now that they had brought the matter into the Estimates there was no reason why Ireland should not have her share, more especially as they were now allocating the money by Act of Parliament. They would have a balance for Irish purposes, and whatever amount they had it should be an equivalent to that of England and Scotland. The matter should be put before the Committee now instead of waiting till next year. Ireland was getting this money not as a matter of compromise but as an equivalent in regard to population, and she was receiving a specific sum arrived at upon a specific basis.

SIR M. HICKS BEACH (Bristol, W.) said the observations made by the two hon. Members who had last addressed the Committee showed that there might be reason to object to the principle upon which this grant was being made. He confessed that ever since he was Chancellor of the Exchequer he always had a very strong objection to the system of equivalent grants, because when they had made a grant for a certain purpose to England they were obliged to make proportionate grants to Ireland and Scotland, quite irrespective of whether they needed them or not. Therefore, when he was Chancellor of the Exchequer, and when they increased the payment for primary educational purposes in England, by a grant-in-aid of voluntary schools and other schools, he declined to treat it on the basis of equivalent grants to Scotland and Ireland, but he agreed to devote certain sums to various purposes, for which money was required, in Scotland and Ireland, those purposes not being necessarily educational, but purposes for which money was required. He was sorry that the Government had not dealt with this matter in the same way. Indeed there was a pledge given to both Ireland and Scotland on account of the large grants made last year for primary education in England. That relieved the voluntary subscribers or the ratepayers in England of a liability which previously had been imposed upon them; but it did not follow to his mind that a precisely similar grant for a precisely similar purpose should be made to Scotland or Ireland, either on the old basis of 80, 11, and 9, or on the basis of population, which was a new basis altogether. What he should have liked to have seen done would have been this: Seeing that a grant was made last session to England, the educational necessity of Ireland and Scotland should also have been considered, and money proposed in the ordinary Estimates in order to meet such necessities. He had seen something of Irish education, and to tell him that no more money was required for the purposes of primary education in Ireland was to tell him what he did not believe. What had happened in this matter? For many years past a large proportion of the salaries of the elementary teachers in England had been met either by private subscriptions or from the rates. The effect of the Act of last session was that a considerable proportion of that sum would in future be met by Parliamentary grants. What had happened in Ireland? For years and years past complaint had been made that the teachers in Ireland were insufficiently paid. What had been the answer? Simply this: "If so, you ought to find more for the payment of teachers from local sources, as is done in England and Scotland." Now that England had been relieved Ireland should be relieved also, by securing the better payment and education of teachers. That would have been the way in which he would have liked to have seen this matter dealt with, but the Government had coupled this question, which was purely educational, with a question to which it did not belong—the cost of the Irish Land Bill of this session. So far as regarded a portion of this grant, which was proposed as a grant-in-aid of the Irish Land Bill, that was a flea-bite upon the Exchequer as compared with the large sum which would have to be found by the taxpayers of the country, no doubt with the goodwill of the House towards the carrying out of that Bill. Whatever his right hon. friend expected to get out of this £185,000 for the purposes of the Land Bill, he very much wished that he had dealt with the cost of the Bill in the Bill itself, leaving this money entirely alone. He did not wish to oppose the Motion the Government had made. He would only say that he regretted that two things which appeared to him entirely different had been mixed up in this way, and he hoped that the House and the Government would not consider that all the needs of elementary education in Ireland had been met, and that nothing more would be required in future.

MR. WYNDHAM said his right hon. friend spoke with very high authority and very great weight upon the question they were now discussing. He was well aware of his right hon. friend's objections to the principle of equivalent grants, and he had hoped that in a measure, if not altogether, he had met some of those objections by the very devices which had been adopted in the Bill. The great objection to the equivalent grant was that it was proper to spend money in England for a particular purpose, and therefore the Government were asked to spend money for the same purpose in Ireland, whether it was proper to spend money for such a purpose or not. If he were to take the suggestion of his right hon. friend, that a more proper course would have been to have voted on the Estimates this year whatever sum could wisely and properly be expended on primary education in Ireland, he must say that he could not have been responsible for framing such Estimates without almost the certainty of being guilty of extravagance. It was not quite so simple a matter as his right hon. friend appeared to think. He suggested that the whole, or at any rate a great part of the legitimate set-off to Ireland, could have been allocated to increasing the salaries or providing pensions for national teachers. But recently a change had been made in the position of the national teachers of Ireland. He did not mean to say that they were satisfied—no body of public servants were satisfied—with the terms they received, but their position had been improved of recent years. The new system under which they were paid was on its trial, and he believed that in the long run it would be found satisfactory. He should have considered it an act of extravagance to have hastily given this money to the national teachers of Ireland. There were many other points in the education of Ireland which deserved attention quite as much as the national teachers. He had said before, and he said it now, that Ireland did not need perhaps precisely the same kind of education as was properly given in

England and Scotland — countries embracing so many industrial centres. The system of education in Ireland, and the financial basis on which it rested, was entirely different from the system in England. In Ireland the Government already gave the capitation grant in respect of all children, and the aid from the localities was almost non-existent.

SIR M. HICKS BEACH said he did not mean to imply that any grant to Ireland should necessarily have been confined to increasing the salaries of teachers. What he did suggest was that the grant should have been confined to educational purposes, and that the Land Bill should not have been mixed up with it.

MR. WYNDHAM assured his right hon. friend that if he could have got the money required under the Land Bill without coming on this grant, no one would have been more pleased than himself, but that was outside the bounds of practical politics. The general sense of the House was that, in view of the great expenditure on English education, the legitimate claims of Ireland would have to be considered. If Ireland desired land purchase so much —well, that must be considered her particular and imminent claim; there might be no good in a grant in respect of education at all until the need had been shown, and until it had been proved that the money could be wisely and economically expended. He was not in a position to say that he would go bail for the economical expenditure of the money if now placed on the Estimates for Irish education. English education stood in need of further financial assistance; but looking at the position of Irish education —to a great extent owing to the practice hitherto pursued—on the last occasion, when it was felt right to give a large equivalent to Ireland to be devoted to education, Irish education was so backward that it was not ready to receive it. England had local government ten years before Ireland, and it was easy to develop technical instruction under the auspices of the locally-elected bodies, so that Ireland, in order to get a set-off on that occasion, got the large sum of £60,000, which was handed over to intermediate education. It was admitted by those who administered these grants, and it was a matter of common knowledge, that they had more money than they knew what to do with. With all these complications before one, and knowing the necessity of economical administration, he felt that Ireland must either lose the money or that the money must be handed out imprudently, and in a way that would give no gain to Ireland. It was for these reasons that this Bill was brought in in its present shape. The argument of the hon. Member for Mid-Lanark contained two assumptions. The first was that education in Ireland was parallel in all particulars with that of Scotland; and the second that the population was increasing in the same way. He much regretted that that was not so, though he hoped that some day it might be the case. So long as the population was stationary or decreasing it was necessary to get the money down by Act of Parliament instead of getting it year by year.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND said the ex-Chancellor of the Exchequer had raised the question how this money should be spent in Ireland. He was sure there was not a single Irish Member who would not agree with the right hon. Gentleman as to the need of further expenditure in Ireland. He understood that what they were doing now was not at all to decide how the money should be spent in Ireland, but whether it should be set aside for Irish purposes. Everyone agreed with the right hon. Gentleman that it would be very much better if this comparatively small fund had not been trenched upon at all for the purpose of land purchase. But in this, as in other matters, they could not have everything their own way, and they recognised that the Chief Secretary and the Government had been obliged in this matter to make a certain amount of compromise and to have part of this fund set aside for the purposes of the Land Act. With regard to the rest of the money, £110,000 would be available for Irish purposes. He personally would not say that there was any great necessity for the expenditure of every shilling of that amount on primary education, but when they came to decide on the Estimates how the money was to be spent that would be the time, as he understood, to put forward their views as to whether it should all go to educational matters or whether some of it should be used for other purposes. At present, what they were securing was that Ireland should not be done out of what she was entitled to. The ex-Chancellor of the Exchequer admitted the great need for the expenditure of money in Ireland. He was sure the right hon. Gentleman would be the first person to agree with the Chief Secretary that Ireland had not always been properly dealt with. If they were to go on the old system of simply giving to Ireland an equivalent grant which could be spent for some purpose, Ireland might not be ready for that expenditure, and the result would be that she would lose it every year, or until she was ready to spend it on education. They were now securing for Ireland £185,000 a year beyond all question or doubt. How that was to be spent, apart from the purposes of the Land Act, would be an open question for future discussion.

Question put, and agreed to.

MR. DELANY (Queen's County, Ossory) moved an Amendment, the object of which was, he said, to enlarge the scope of the measure so as to enable the diversion of a small portion of the grant to works of arterial drainage. He had time after time called the attention of the right hon. Gentleman to the question of the River Barrow, and to the necessity for drainage operations in connection with it, and he therefore hoped that the right hon. Gentleman would avail himself of this opportunity to have the matter attended to.

Amendment proposed—

"After the word 'Development' to insert the words 'Arterial Drainage.'"—(*Mr. Delany.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be inserted in the Bill."

MR. WYNDHAM said that it would be inconvenient for the Committee to discuss every single proposition which could be brought forward for the application of this grant. He had used the widest possible words in declaring that it should be devoted to the improvement of the economic conditions of the country, and he ventured to point out that arterial drainage was one of those economic conditions.

MR. LEAMY (Kildare, N.) said he thought his hon. friend had done quite right in bringing this matter forward. They were sick of appealing to the House and to the Irish Government on the question of arterial drainage.

MR. T. W. RUSSELL said he was as anxious as anyone about arterial drainage, and he might mention the case of the drainage of the Bann as a very pressing need in the north of Ireland, but he wished to utter a caution against loading the Development Grant with works of that kind. The whole problem of arterial drainage, including the Bann, would have to be dealt with, and it would require a very large expenditure indeed. A great deal of money had already been sunk in these works and practically thrown into the water, because no good had resulted. He suggested that this was a question in regard to which the Irish Members on both sides of the House should unite together next session and insist upon consideration for a general scheme of arterial drainage, securing from the national Exchequer a fair share of the expense, and also securing that the various interests involved should bear a reasonable contribution.

COLONEL SAUNDERSON (Armagh, N.) said he sympathised with the views expressed by the last speaker. He considered that when the arterial drainage was undertaken it would require more money than could be provided out of the Development Grant He and his colleagues in the north of Ireland were, as the Chief Secretary knew, deeply interested in the drainage of the Bann, and that was one of the first great arterial drainage works which ought to be carried out. He did not know the case of the South so well, but so far as the North was concerned he knew the unfortunate people in the neighbourhood of Lough Neagh had already paid over £120,000 to have their lands flooded every year, and not only had they been drowned out but their claims had been drowned out. He agreed as to the desirability for united action to obtain a remedy for this grievance.

MR. WYNDHAM said his right hon. and gallant friend knew that he had devoted not a little attention to the question of the drainage of the Bann, and he again appealed to the Committee not to occupy time in discussing the various proposals for the expenditure of this grant, or else they would never be able to get through the work in a reasonable time. Let them first make sure that the money would be available for Irish development.

MR. DELANY said he was quite satisfied with the statement of the right hon. Gentleman, and begged to ask leave to withdraw his Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES said he had wished to proposean Amendment in line 23, which dealt with the arrangement for allocating and auditing the grant. As the clause now stood, he thought it gave too great powers to the Treasury. It left it to the Treasury to settle nearly everything, to say what should be done with any unexpended portion of the grant, and to decide whether or not there should be any audit, and he thought the decision probably would be that there should be practically no audit. He did not think it was a proper power to leave to any Department of the State. It was a power which was intended to be, and, in his opinion, should be exercised by such a body as the Public Accounts Committee, which represented the House, and was not appointed by the Government or composed of official nominees or subject to official influence. He, therefore, suggested that the regulations referred to in this part of the clause should be made, not by the Treasury but by the Public Accounts Committee, or that the Treasury should have the assent of that Committee to any regulations which it might make. He begged to move.

Amendment proposed—

"In line 23, to leave out the word 'Treasury' and insert the words 'Public Accounts Committee of the House of Commons.'"—(*Mr. Gibson Bowles.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'Treasury' stand part of the clause."

MR. WYNDHAM hoped his hon. friend would not press the Amendment. He was aware that he held very strong views as to the duties of the Public Accounts Committee, and as to the control which should be exercised over the expenditure of public money, but he asked him not to select that measure as affording a fitting opportunity for giving a first demonstration of his financial theories. He might tell him that every shilling spent under the Bill would be reviewed by the Public Accounts Committee of the House, although, of course, a year after it had been spent. It was necessary that the Irish Government should come to some proper arrangement as to the auditing of the accounts. Suppose, for instance, £20,000 was devoted to some educational purposes in Ireland, and some other sum of money to assist economic development, it was clear that the Irish Government must make some arrangement for those two purposes, and that there must be a proper audit of accounts in respect of them. The Treasury would stand at their right hand to guide them, and ultimately the accounts would have to be submitted to the Public Accounts Committee.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON (Dundee) said there was one very serious objection to the proposal of the hon. Member for King's Lynn which had not been pointed out by the Chief Secretary. The Public Accounts Committee had the duty of examining the accounts of the various Departments and reporting thereon, and the hon. Member now proposed for the first time in the history of this country to confer upon it functions which the Committee had not been called upon to exercise in the past. He wished to ask the right hon. Gentleman what was the meaning of the words regulations as to the accumulation of money. He understood that the Treasury might make regulations with regard to audit and other matters; but he did not understand what the regulations with reference to the accumulation of money meant. Would the Treasury have the power to say whether money was to be accumulated or not?

MR. BUCHANAN (Perthshire, E.) asked if he rightly understood the right hon. Gentleman to state that the Irish Development Grant Account would be audited by the Controller and Auditor-General.

MR. WYNDHAM said he thought that was quite clear, because they were proceeding by way of Estimate. The money would be appropriated in every financial year, and would be reviewed by the Public Accounts Committee. With reference to the Question of the hon. Member for Dundee, there was no novelty in the proposal in the sub-section. The Congested Districts Board in Ireland and the Agricultural Department had certain moneys at their disposal to be devoted to certain purposes, but their steps were, to a certain extent, guided by the expert assistance of the Treasury. A Department might make a proposal to accumulate money which might not be of the best possible character. All such proposals would be submitted to the Treasury just as the Estimates were submitted year by year for Treasury criticism. The words were put in at the instance of the Treasury, and he himself took no exception to them. The Treasury could give very great assistance with regard to the proper allocation of funds for various purposes, though those purposes would be decided by this House in Committee of Supply.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON asked if he might then take it that the accumulation would be in the hands of the Lord Lieutenant under the direction of the Treasury.

MR. WYNDHAM said that the whole financial structure would be arranged with the advice of the Treasury.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES said that he thought he might withdraw his objection. It arose from the nature of the grant; because it was not an ordinary Estimate subject to the ordinary rules under which balances were surrendered at the end of the year. If he rightly understood his right hon. friend however, the Government now undertook that the Vote should be submitted to the Controller and Auditor-General and would consequently come before the Public Accounts Committee. If that were so he would withdraw his Amendment.

MR. WYNDHAM said that was so.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON said that the right hon. Gentleman could not be expected to give an authoritative answer to such Questions. These were Questions which ought to be addressed to the Treasury; and a representative of the Treasury should be present.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES said he thought the criticism of the hon. Gentleman was captious. It was for the right hon. Gentleman to say what course he would adopt. He asked leave to withdraw the Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 1, line 26, to leave out Sub-section (4) and insert the words '(4) Any estimate presented in respect of the grant payable in any financial year shall show the amount of the estimated balance to the credit of the Ireland Development Grant Account at the beginning of the financial year, and also the proposed application of the sums to be issued out of the account in the financial year.'"—(*Mr. Wyndham.*)

Amendment agreed to.

MR. CALDWELL said that the Chief Secretary stated that it was better, in the interests of Ireland, that the equivalent grant should be circulated on a basis of population. For this purpose England, Scotland, and Ireland were practically a partnership. Previous grants, however, had been estimated without reference to population. For this purpose, England, Scotland, and Ireland were practically a partnership. One partner drew out a certain amount of money from the Imperial funds, and it was fair that the other partners should get equivalent sums. It was not necessary that Ireland should draw it out in proportion to population. Supposing Scotland was asked to base her grant on the number of children in voluntary schools in that country. That would not be fair to Scotland, because she had comparatively few voluntary school children as compared with England. Next year Ireland would have to pay increased taxation. England might draw a larger sum; and, in that case, Ireland would have to pay a portion of the increase. Why should not Ireland have her equivalent grant fixed? The population of Ireland was decreasing; and it was absurd to say that her grant should be fixed on the same principle as applied to England and Scotland. It might be favourable to these countries;

but it was obviously adverse to Ireland. If a certain proportion was fixed, then the grant would rise automatically as the grant to England increased.

Mr. WYNDHAM said he had no hope of being able to convince the hon. Member; but he should like to convince the hon. Member for South Kildare that Ireland would receive better treatment under the Bill than she would receive had the hon. Member for Mid-Lanark been Chancellor of the Exchequer. The basis of previous grants was calculated on the quota given to the Imperial Treasury by the three countries. That was unfavourable to Ireland, because as taxation increased, a smaller quota was made by the poorer country as compared to the quota paid by the richer country.

Mr. FLYNN (Cork Co., N.) said he did not think that the right hon. Gentleman was quite accurate. He had always understood that equivalent grants were not based on the quota contributed by each country, but on the aggregate amount distributed in the proportion of eighty, eleven and nine. When Lord Goschen was Chancellor of the Exchequer he was pressed over and over again for some information with reference to the financial relations between Great Britain and Ireland; and then, for the first time, the Treasury put forward a proposal that grants of this kind should be put on the basis, not of the quota contributed, but in the proportion of eighty, eleven and nine of the aggregate amount of the probate duty grant. When Ireland made any demand in connection with the Local Government Act, the relief money was based not on population but upon the eighty, eleven and nine basis. It would be most disastrous to Ireland to have this based on the population. He submitted the proper way was to take the precedent of the agricultural grant.

Mr. WYNDHAM: Then you would get £150,000 instead of £185,000.

Clause, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 2 agreed to.

Bill, as amended, to be considered upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 306.]

MILITARY WORKS BILL.

(Considered in Committee.)

(In the Committee).

[Mr. J. N. Lowther (Cumberland, Penrith) in the chair.]

Clause 1.

Mr. LOUGH (Islington, W.) said the Amendment he had put down was one which would govern several other Amendments to the Bill, and if the noble Lord could see his way to accept it, it would greatly facilitate the proceedings of the Government; if, on the other hand, he could not accept it, the struggle on this Bill was likely to be much prolonged. The object of the Amendment was, first, economy. When the Resolution was put before the House they were told that £5,000,000 would be required for works, and with great reluctance the House passed the Resolution. When the Bill was issued it was found that the expenditure was to be £5,500,000 and not £5,000,000. He objected to these items of £500,000 being slipped in in this manner or taken in the session, and on that ground, on the ground of economy, he moved the Amendment. But it raised a much larger question. The Bill brought in was one of a series of measures, the first of which was introduced in 1897, and they had always been led to understand that this Bill would be of the same kind as its predecessors. When they came to examine it, however, they found an entirely different state of things. In this Bill an entirely different principle was adopted. The new principle laid down was that appropriations-in-aid should be used under the terms of this Bill, but instead of proceeding in the usual way by a Vote of the House, any sum that could be realised by the sale of barracks or Government property should go to increase the expenditure under this Bill. There were many other bad precedents created. He objected to these appropriations, and therefore begged to move.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 1, line 10, to leave out the words from the word 'Act,' to end of Sub-section (1)."—(*Mr. Lough.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the clause."

*SIR A. HAYTER (Walsall) said he supported the Amendment. He thought they ought to be very careful before allowing this enormous sum to be taken in this Vote. He had one special objection to this Bill, and that was that it constituted a reversal of the Barracks Act. Under the Act any amount received from the sale of barracks or other Government property was to be deducted from the amount received under this Vote as he had good reason to know, he having examined the Accountant-General upon the matter. The Barracks Act had now expired, but it had done a great deal of good, inasmuch as it had enabled the House to judge what was being spent. That control they would lose if this Bill passed. And because he thought this was a reversal of the Barracks Act he should support the Amendment.

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, North), asked whether this £5,000,000 for the sale of barracks included the land of the barracks in Dublin near the river.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Lord STANLEY, Lancashire, Westhoughton), thought it was not possible to accept the Amendment. The hon. Gentleman seemed to think the War Office asked for an indefinite sum, but, on the contrary, they asked for £5,000,000 as the definite sum they should take. This was not in any way an increase of the Vote; they only asked that they should be allowed to spend the money they might obtain from the sale of barracks for the purpose of making provision for the same number or more men elsewhere. He thought it would not be desirable to give any information as to what barracks they intended to sell until after they had been sold, because otherwise the amount they stated they desired to get might be taken as the maximum, whereas in some cases they hoped to get more.

MR. BUCHANAN (Perthshire, E.) said the noble Lord had attempted to deny that this was an increased charge. Surely he was mistaken, because under this section they were empowering the Government to spend £5,500,000 instead of £5,000,000. That might be a good thing or a bad thing, but, at any rate, it did not correspond with the description given of it by the noble Lord. The point was that it was wholly contrary to the previous practice of the War Department to do this thing. In the ordinary course of things, if the War Office disposed of lands or of old barracks the proceeds would go into the appropriation-in-aid. In the Works Act of 1890, it was provided that when the Government sold barracks, as was proposed under this Bill, the proceeds f the sale should go in reduction of the charge for the new works. The words of that Act provided that the Secretary of State might, with the concurrence of the Treasury, sell any land in the United Kingdom for the time being vested in him, and that the proceeds of sale should be applied for the purposes of the Act, the amount authorised to be received out of the Consolidated Fund under the Act to be reduced accordingly. Why should the Government not have adopted a similar provision in the present Bill? Why should they not have allowed the proceeds of the proposed sales to go in diminution of the charge, instead of making it an addition to the charge? The War Office were taking ample money for their scheme—more than ample, he believed—and there was no need, therefore, for assigning to them this particular power to expend an additional £500,000 over and above the £5,000,000 provided for under the Bill.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford) said he did not think hon. Members opposite quite appreciated the effect of the proposal which they were making. He could not imagine any financial theory more vicious. It was that they should first raise money by loan in order to build new barracks, that they should then sell existing barracks, and that the proceeds of the sale should be utilised for the purpose of reducing the burden on the taxpayer. He really thought that the House would have serious ground for complaint if any such plan were carried out.

COLONEL NOLAN disagreed with the idea that sufficient money was taken under the Bill. He had never heard of works which had not cost a great deal more than the original estimate, and he feared that this proposed expenditure of £5,000,000 would probably grow to £7,000,000 before the scheme was completed. He wished to know whether the proceeds of the sale of land at the mouth of the Liffey some time ago—proceeds, he believed, amounting to about £100,000—were included in the £500,000 provided under the Bill?

LORD STANLEY: Certainly not.

COLONEL NOLAN said his complaint was that money obtained by the sale of barracks in Galway might be expended in Dublin. He thought it ought to be spent in the immediate locality where the old buildings were sold, and he did not think that they ought to utilise the proceeds of the sale of barracks in England for new barracks in South Africa.

MR. LOUGH said the objections raised on that side of the House had not been appreciated by the Government. They wanted to secure that all these matters should be discussed by the House. The right hon. Gentleman had told them that very valuable works might become useless, and might have to be sold. Well, any transaction of that kind, involving possibly hundreds of thousands of pounds, ought not to take place without the House knowing all about it, and the House should have a voice in the appropriation of the money. If their plan were adopted the matter would come up in the annual Estimates, and an opportunity would thus be afforded to question Ministers as to the reason for their action. It would help the House in checking the extravagance which had set in, and which would prevent things being done in a hole and corner way. His hon. friend the Member for Perthshire had quoted the words of the Act passed twelve years ago, and he thought they were entitled to have some explanation why the Government had departed from the words of that Act. He also thought that they should be told whether a new principle had been established allowing the War Office, behind the back of Parliament, to sell any valuable property and apply the money as it chooses.

*MR. BRODRICK denied there was any idea of doing anything behind the back of Parliament. Their proposals would be made as clear as possible.

MR. LOUGH: Where?

*MR. BRODRICK: On the face of the Bill. He had heard exactly the same argument used when the first Barracks Act was introduced, and the difficulty was then relieved by providing that the schedule of expenditure in each year should be laid before the House. In the same way the Government proposed that there should be a scheduled statement of the sum realised by the sale of old barracks, and that surely would enable the House, if it chose, to further inquire into the question, and would give effective Parliamentary control. He hoped the hon. Member, under these circumstances, would not press his Amendment further.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs) said the question was why should the change have been made, and what was to be gained by it? Why had the Government not adhered to the words of the previous Act?

*MR. BRODRICK said the answer was simple. The change had been made because, in this particular case, large sums had been asked for barracks in South Africa, and it was in South Africa mainly that the necessity had arisen for selling barracks.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN pointed out that in 1890 also there was a prospect that certain barracks would have to be sold in the same way, and yet the words which had been quoted were put into the Act to ensure that the proceeds should go in in reduction of the amount authorised to be used out of the Consolidated Fund. That was a businesslike, proper, and regular way of doing the business, and he must press for an answer why a change had now been made. If a large sum of money was to be realised by the sale of barracks, in his opinion it ought to go in reduction of the amount proposed to be raised under the Bill. It appeared to give justification for an expenditure of £5,000,000, when in reality it was an expenditure of £5,500,000. If the old-established practice had been followed, there would have been no complaint of ambiguity.

MR. COURTENAY WARNER (Staffordshire, Lichfield) said no reason had been given for not following the old system. The reasons given by the right hon. Gentleman were for not putting the sum on the annual Estimates, but he thought that even for that the right reasons had not been put forward. The expenditure on barracks, provided for in the Estimates, was being reduced year by year, and placed in these Loans Bills instead. The Vote for works, buildings, and repairs, in this year's Estimates was only £1,900,000, as against £2,186,000 last year, and over £3,000,000 in the year preceding. It was the fact that barracks were regularly being provided for out of borrowed money that gave rise to the inconvenience with regard to the proceeds of sales being taken as grants-in-aid in the ordinary Estimates. The right hon. Gentleman had given no explanation of what was really a falsification of public accounts, inasmuch as the gross sum was put at a lower figure than it actually was. A much larger proportion ought to appear on the annual Estimates.

Question put.

The Committee divided: Ayes 109; Noes 39. (Division List No. 201).

AYES.

Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (*Manch'r*
Balfour, Rt. Hn. G. W. (*Leeds*
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benj.
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Bowles, T. Gibson (*Lynn Regis*)
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Cavendish, V. C. W, (*Derbyshire*
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J. (*Birm.*
Chamberlain, Rt Hn. J. A (*Worc*
Chapman, Edward
Cochrane, Hn. Thos H. A. E.
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Right Hon. Jesse
Corbett, A. Cameron (*Glasgow*
Corbett, T. L. (*Down, North*)
Craig, Charles Curtis (*Antrim, S*
Cranborne, Viscount
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Denny, Colonel
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dixon-Hartland, Sir F. Dixon
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers
Duke, Henry Edward
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Elliot, Hn. A. Ralph Douglas
Faber, E. B. (*Hants, W.*)
Faber, George Denison (*York*)
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson, Rt. Hn Sir J. (*Manc'r*
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Firbank, Sir Joseph Thomas
Flower, Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Fyler, John Arthur
Gardner, Ernest
Gordon, J. (*Londonderry, S.*)
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Groves, James Grimble
Hardy, Laurence (*Kent, Ashfd*
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
Jeffreys, Rt. Hn. Arthur Fred
Kemp, Lieut.-Col. George
Law, Andrew Bonar (*Glasgow*
Lawrence, Wm. F. (*Liverpool*
Lawson, J. Grant (*Yorks. N.R.*
Lees, Sir Elliott (*Birkenhead*)
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (*Bristol, S.*
Lowe, Francis William
Lowther, Rt. Hon. Jas. (*Kent*)
Lucas, Reginald. J (*Portsmouth*)
Macdona, John Cumming
Maxwell, Rt Hn Sir H. E (*Wigt'n*
Mitchell, Edw. (*Fermanagh, N.*
Mitchell, William (*Burnley*)
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Muntz, Sir Philip A.
Murray, Rt Hn A. Graham (*Bute*
Palmer, Walter (*Salisbury*)
Peel, Hn. Wm. Robert Wellesley
Percy, Earl
Plummer, Walter R.
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Pym, C. Guy
Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
Reid, James (*Greenock*)
Renshaw, Sir Charles Bine
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. Chas. Thomson
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Samuel, Harry S. (*Limehouse*
Saunderson, Rt. Hn. Col. E. J.
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Sinclair, Louis (*Romford*)
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smith, Hn. W. F. D. (*Strand*)
Stanley, Edw. Jas. (*Somerset*)
Stanley, Lord (*Lancs.*)
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Stroyan, John
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Sturt, Hn. Humphry Napier
Taylor, Austin (*East Toxteth*)
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. E. M.
Valentia, Viscount
Vincent, Col Sir C E. H (*Sheffield*)
Walrond, Rt. Hn. Sir William H
Whiteley, H. (*Ashton und. Lyne*
Williams, Rt Hn J Powell- (*Birm*
Wilson, John (*Glasgow*)
Wilson-Todd, Sir W. H. (*Yorks.*)
Worsley-Taylor, Henry Wilson
Wortley, Rt. Hn. C. B. Stuart
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—
Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burns, John
Caldwell, James
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Causton, Richard Knight
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, Alfred (*Carmarthen*)
Emmott, Alfred
Fuller, J. M. F.
Gladstone, Rt. Hn Herbert John
Grant, Corrie
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton

Harwood, George
Hayne, Rt. Hn. Charles Seale-
Hayter, Rt. Hon. Sir Arthur D.
Horniman, Frederick John
Jones, David B. (*Swansea*)
Jones, William (*Carnarvonshire*
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leigh, Sir Joseph
M'Kenna, Reginald
Nolan, Col. John P. (*Galway, N*
O'Brien, P. J. (*Tipperary, N.*)
Partington, Oswald
Robertson, Edmund (*Dundee*)
Russell, T. W.
Shackleton, David James
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair John (*Forfarshire*)
Soares, Ernest J.
Spencer, Rt. Hn. C. R. (*Northants*
Thomas, David Alfred (*Merthyr*
Thomson, F. W. (*York, W. R.*)
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Wallace, Robert
Warner, Thos. Courtenay T.
Wason, Eugene (*Clackmannan*)
Wason, J. Cathcart (*Orkney*)
White, Luke (*York, E. R.*
Wilson, Henry J. (*York, W.R.*

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Lough and Master of Elibank.

MR. LOUGH said he would move the next Amendment standing in his name on the Paper. His explanation of it was in the same sense as the last Amendment. The object of the change which the Government had made in the Act was to extend the period of borrowing for the erection of barracks. It was said that many barracks were unsuitable, and therefore the old ones had to be realised and new ones erected. He did not know why at the same time they should extend the period for which the money could be borrowed. Under the Act of 1897, the money had to be repaid within thirty years. That provision was adopted because it was thought that this was an exceptional matter, and that the Army ought to be fitted up with sufficient barracks put up by loans, and it was thought by that means that an end would be put to this system of continually borrowing for the necessities of the Army. Now the measure had been entirely changed, and they were asking that the repayment of loans should run for thirty years from the time of borrowing. The objection to this system was that the Government came too often for these loans, but if the principle that was now being asserted was accepted there was not the slightest reason why the Government should not hasten to spend any money which they had the power of borrowing on the previous Acts, and yet they came to the House for £5,500,000 more. If they were permitted to extend the period of loans as long as they liked it would set up a new and a very dangerous precedent. He begged to move his Amendment.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 1, line 20, to leave out the words from the word 'Act' to end of Sub-section (2)."—(*Mr. Lough.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out, to the end of line 22, stand part of the clause."

*MR. BRODRICK contended that the proposal in this Bill was only a natural one, and the hon. Member in this matter appeared to be governed too much by precedent. The intention of Parliament in these Acts was that the repayment of loans should be spread over 30 years, and by this Act they were continuing the practice laid down by Parliament in the Act of 1897.

MR BUCHANAN said that the right hon. Gentleman's interpretation of this Act was about as inaccurate as his interpretation of past Acts. He stated that this was really following previous precedents, but it was not so. In the first Military Works Act provision was made that the money borrowed should be met by the terminable annuities over a period of 30 years, dating from the time of the passing of the Military Works Act, and that provision had been continued in subsequent Acts. Under the first Military Works Act the money was borrowed all the way through on the same terms, and now, for the first time, in this Bill an alteration was being made, and the terms would vary from year to year, because the annuities would run out at different periods in the future. As each sum was issued the borrowing would be under different conditions and at different times, and consequently the annuities would expire at different periods. He supported his hon. friend mainly because it was their chief object to hold the Government to the idea that they should have a real scheme in their minds for the construction of a definite amount for large military works. That was the reason for which the House assented to the Military Works Act. If they now permitted this substantial alteration from previous Acts they would be allowing a departure from the original intention of those Acts.

MR. COURTENAY WARNER said that one great object had been entirely overlooked, which was that this proposal was an encouragement for the War Office to borrow under this Bill instead of under former Bills, because they could borrow cheaper. He thought the old Bills ought to be wound up first, and he preferred the Amendment, of the hon. Member for Perthshire. He wished to know if the Secretary of State for War would accept the hon. Member for Perthshire's Amendment, which obviated the antiquated date of 1897 and made it "the passing of this Act." That would meet their objections to a great extent, because it would make the borrowing less indefinite.

MR. BRODRICK said that was a matter for the Treasury.

MR. COURTENAY WARNER said that more or less it lay with the War Office to take up loans when they liked, and it would greatly assist them to understand the indebtedness that the War Office had got into if they knew when the loans expired. Instead of having all this debt wiped out at one time they would have these loans wiped out at a series of different dates instead of in a period of thirty years. He thought if the right hon. Gentleman would accept the suggestion of his hon. friend the Member for Perthshire, it would bring some sort of order into the issuing of these loans. If not it would be the duty of hon. Members to try and prevent this muddling of accounts by voting for this Amendment.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) contended that this proposal went entirely beyond the terms of the Resolution which authorised this Act. He did not know when the works would be completed. Estimates as to their cost had been made but those estimates would probably be far exceeded, and they would have an undetermined period during which borrowing might take place, and at each borrowing the date would be altered. That would be extremely inconvenient, and his opinion was that the proper way would be to adopt the course suggested by the Amendment of the hon. Member for Perthshire. Otherwise there would be no certainty about the matter. He should recommend the Secretary of State for War to consider whether he could not accept the Amendment.

MR. CALDWELL (Lanarkshire, Mid) said this Bill marked a new departure in regard to borrowing for military works. Under the old system the initiation of works was based upon the expenditure to be incurred each year. Under the new plan, the object of which was to have a definite scheme, money was borrowed in the shape of annuities terminable in thirty years. By that means the Government was enabled to formulate a scheme for certain works of a permanent character. What the Secretary of State for War now proposed to do was to introduce a permanent system of borrowing. They were now adopting a plan of borrowing by which a burden was to be thrown upon their successors. He supposed that this system would be extended to all other kinds of works, and that there would be continuous borrowing instead of wiping off debt. It was a system conducive to extravagance, and, not merely that, but many of the works carried out might be of a character which would not be beneficial for thirty years. Barracks might be built in certain parts of the country, and on account of some change in Army organisation they might become useless. Then barracks might be built according to certain sanitary requirements, and it might be found desirable to put more troops there, but the buildings might be useless for making additions to, and they would have to be pulled down. The main objection to this system of borrowing was that instead of paying as they went along they were adopting a system by which the burden would be thrown on the future.

Question put.

The Committee divided, Ayes 118, Noes 51. (Division List No. 202.)

AYES.

Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Atkinson, Right Hon. John
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (*Manch'r*
Balfour, Rt Hn. Gerald W (*Leeds*

Balfour, Kenneth R. (*Christch.*)
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benj.
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Bowles, T. G. (*Lynn Regis*)
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Cavendish, V C W (*Derbysh.*)
Cecil, Evelyn (*Aston Manor*)
Chamberlain, Rt Hn. J. (*Birm.*
Chamberlain, Rt Hn. J. A. (*Worc*
Chapman, Edward
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Corbett, A. Cameron (*Glasgow*)
Corbett, T. L. (*Down, North*)
Craig, Chas. Curtis (*Antrim, S.*
Cranborne, Lord
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Denny, Colonel
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dixon-Hartland, Sir F. Dixon
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers
Doxford, Sir Wm. Theodore
Duke, Henry Edward
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Faber, E. B. (*Hants, W.*)
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J (*Manc'r*
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Firbank, Sir Joseph Thomas
Fisher, William Hayes
Flower, Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Fyler, John Arthur
Gardner, Ernest
Gordon, J. (*Londonderry, S.*)
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Groves, James Grimble
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Hain, Edward
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
Horner, Frederick William
Houston, Robert Paterson
Kemp, Lieut.-Colonel George
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (*Glasgow*
Lawson, J. Grant (*Yorks, N.R.*)
Lees, Sir Elliott (*Birkenkead*)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Rt. Hn. W. (*Bristol, S*
Lowe, Francis William
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas, Reg'ld J. (*Portsmouth*)
Lyttelton, Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
Mitchell, Edw. (*Fermanagh, N.*
Mitchell, William (*Burnley*)
Morrell, George Herbert
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
Mowbray, Sir Robert Gray C.
Muntz, Sir Philip A.
Murray Rt Hn. A Graham (*Bute*)
Murray, Charles J. (*Coventry*)
Palmer, Walter (*Salisbury*)
Pease, H. Pike (*Darlington*)
Peel, Hn. Wm. Robert Wellesley
Percy, Earl
Plummer, Walter R.
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Pym, C. Guy
Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
Rattigan, Sir William Henry
Reid, James (*Greenock*)
Renshaw, Sir Charles Bine
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. C. Thomson
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Samuel, Harry S. (*Limehouse*)
Scott, Sir S. (*Marylebone, W.*)
Shaw-Stewart, M. H. (*Renfrew*)
Sinclair, Louis (*Romford*)
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Stanley, Edw. Jas. (*Somerset*)
Stanley, Lord (*Lancs.*)
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Strutt, Hon Charles Hedley
Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
Talbot, Lord E. (*Chichester*)
Taylor, Austin (*East Toxteth*)
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Vincent, Col Sir C. E. H. *Sheffield*
Walrond, Rt. Hon. Sir W. H
Whiteley, H (*Ashton und. Lyne*
Williams, Rt Hn J Powell- (*Birm*
Wilson, John (*Glasgow*)
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (*Bath*
Worsley-Taylor, Henry Wilson
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Ambrose, Robert
Atherley-Jones, L.
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burt, Thomas
Caldwell, James
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H
Causton, Richard Knight
Davies, Alfred (*Carmarthen*)
Devlin, Chas. Ramsay (*Galway*)
Dewar, John A. (*Inverness-sh.*)
Elibank, Master of
Emmott, Alfred
Fuller, J. M. F.
Griffith, Ellis J.
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Sir Wm.
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-
Hayter, Rt. Hn. Sir Arthur D.
Horniman, Frederick John
Hutchinson, Dr. Charles Fredk.
Jacoby, James Alfred
Jones, D. Brynmor (*Swansea*)
Jones, William (*Carnarvonsh.*)
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (*Cornwall*
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Lundon, W.
Mappin, Sir Fredk. Thorpe
Nolan, Col. John P. (*Galway N.*
Partington, Oswald
Paulton, James Mellor
Redmond, William (*Clare*)
Robertson, Edmund (*Dundee*)
Russell, T. W.
Shackleton, David James
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (*Forfarshire*)
Soares, Ernest J.
Spencer, Rt Hon C R (*Northants*
Thomas, David Alfred (*Merthyr*
Thomson, F. W. (*York, W.R.*)
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Wallace, Robert
Warner, Thos. Courtenay T.
Wason, Eugene (*Clackmannan*
Wason, John Cathcart (*Orkney*
White, Luke (*York, E. R.*)
Wilson, Henry J. (*York, W.R.*)
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Lough and Mr. Corrie Grant.

Mr. BUCHANAN moved as an Amendment to leave out "dates of borrowing" in line 23 and insert "passing of this Act." What he now proposed was that the borrowing necessary under this Bill, when it became an Act, should be from the time of the passing of the Act. That was the ordinary form in which these clauses ran in Bills of this and an analogous nature. He was sure it would meet with the approval of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, because, until this Bill and the Naval Works Bill were introduced, it had been the invariable practice to borrow the money as from the date of the passing of the Act. That was a valuable provision in respect that it enabled one to have confidence in the statement made that the Government really had definite and clear-cut schemes in their heads which were going to be carried through under the Bill submitted to Parliament. He thought it was very much in the interest of regularity in finance that they should accept this Amendment so that they should be able to ascertain more definitely what the liabilities were likely to be under the Bill.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 1, line 23, leave out the words 'dates of borrowing,' and insert the words 'passing of this Act.'"—(*Mr. Buchanan.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the clause."

*MR. BRODRICK said that there were two reasons why he could not accept the Amendment. In the first place it was at variance with the Resolution of the House under which this Bill was introduced, and in the second place it would be a most inconvenient plan on which to act. If the Amendment were adopted the annuity would run for thirty years, not from the date of borrowing, but from the date of the passing of the Act which must be antecedent by some months to the borrowing of the money for the various purposes contemplated. He was afraid that the Government could not accept the Amendment.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES said he was constrained to support the Amendment as one in the interest of sound finance and according to precedent. There was no precedent to be found for the operation suggested in the Bill. It was an operation indefinite and infinite, because there was absolutely no limit to the time in which the work was to be completed, and in which the money was to be required. Consequently there was absolutely no limit to the period to which the liability of the country was to be made to extend. He thought the Secretary of State for War hardly understood his own Bill. The right hon. Gentleman had stated that the Amendment would violate the Resolution on which the Bill was founded. The only violation of the Resolution would be if the Bill exceeded its terms, but they might do, within the Resolution, as much as they liked. In his belief what the Resolution embodied was what was contemplated by this Amendment. The right hon. Gentleman proposed that there was not to be a date, but many dates, for borrowing the money—every year, or every month, or every fortnight—when he had to make a new bargain, and the liability was fixed from the date of the new borrowing. The Committee should remember that this was a Loan Bill, and it was most important and entirely in consonance with the traditions of the House that a definite term should be fixed to the date of borrowing unless it was for the creation of National Stock or new National Debt, in which there was only a liability to pay so much per annum, but even there also there was often a date fixed for the extinction of the loan. It was essential to fix a day when the liability for borrowing the amount stated in the Bill was to be extinguished. That had always been done in previous Bills of this kind. The right hon. Gentleman had said that it would be an inconvenient plan. Why had that inconvenient plan been previously followed? Certainly there could be no inconvenience in it. This system of loans for the purposes of naval and military works and public office sites was an extremely mischievous one. It was no new one. The theory was that it was better to borrow in a lump sum than from year to year. He was not going to dispute that for a moment. If the system of borrowing proposed by this Bill were adopted, it practically came to a system of estimating from year to year. The right hon. Gentleman might say that next year they required a million, and in the following year another million and so on. That cut away the whole ground for doing the whole operation under one loan.

*MR. BRODRICK: Nobody suggests that.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES said the Bill suggested it. The Bill suggested that the Government were to make one operation of the £5,000,000 instead of coming to Parliament year by year for what they wanted. He should find it absolutely necessary to vote for the Amendment.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT (Monmouthshire, W.) said he should like to ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what was the reason for abolishing the practice that had been established in regard to these loans for many years? It was a serious thing to do when we were increasing, so enormously as we were doing, the liabilities of the country. He would ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether the effect of this new practice would be to postpone to a later date than would otherwise be the case the liquidation of this debt. If that were so, it was self-condemned. What they ought to do was to take in each year what they wanted. He wanted to know why they were piling loan on loan and debt on debt at this enormous rate. Some good reason ought to be given for introducing what on the face of it appeared to be a much more lax and a much more onerous system of borrowing than that to which they had been accustomed.

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. RITCHIE, Croydon) said that the right hon. Gentleman was evidently not in favour of borrowing for these works at all; that each year should bear its own burden, whatever the nature of the expenditure that had to be incurred.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT: Not at all.

*MR. RITCHIE said he understood the right hon. Gentleman to say that he objected to the principle of borrowing for capital expenditure. But if the right hon. Gentleman looked with disfavour only upon the accumulation of loans he was bound to say he sympathised with him. But it must be remembered that there were great deficiencies to be made up, and to have put them on the Estimates would have been to impose upon the present taxpayers a burden which they were not entitled to place upon them.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT said that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had entirely misapprehended him. He had no objection to the practice which had been established by these loans. He had done it himself. He was speaking of the liquidation of the loans. He wished to know whether or not this new practice of making the terminable annuities run at different periods would postpone the liquidation of the loan to a more distant period than would have been the case under the established practice.

*MR. RITCHIE said that it was not contemplated to raise the money by one loan which would run a certain mumber of years. His hon. friend the Member for Lynn Regis said that the purpose of the Government was to raise the money in one lump sum.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES said that what he had stated was that the Resolution contemplated raising the money in one lump sum, repayable in thirty years. But this Bill contemplated the raising of successive loans, repayable at successive periods.

*MR. RITCHIE said that these moneys were not raised by one loan but were raised as required, by means of terminable annuities. It was true that the proposal they were making was a departure from the principle laid down in the Bills of previous years, but let them see whether it was based upon sound principles or otherwise. The question was over what period of time ought the expenditure for these buildings to be spread. If thirty years was the fixed period for repayment, it was only reasonable and proper that the thirty years should commence from the time when the building was undertaken. It might well be that the building might not be undertaken until four or five years after the passing of the Act, and it was, in his opinion, perfectly justifiable that the period of repayment should commencefrom the time the money was expended. That was common sense, and there was no financial difficulty about it.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON (Dundee) said that the first Loan Act was the Naval Works Act of 1895, and that Act and every subsequent Works Act until the present was founded on the principle that the money borrowed should all of it be repaid within a period not exceeding thirty years from the first Naval Works Act. The same principle and the same system were adopted in the Military Works Act. The proposal in the Bill was a real departure from the principle upon which the Naval Works Acts and the Military Works Acts had hitherto been founded. The proposal of his learned friend was a fair and real compromise between the old and the new systems—viz: that the repayment should be made within a period of thirty years from the date on which the Bill passed. They were piling liability upon liability upon the State, and throwing more and more of the burden upon the future. Having thrown so much on the future, they should adhere to the established practice and let future generations bear the proportion that they were originally held to be bound to bear. In the case of the Naval Works Bill the Admiralty had stated that if the old system was continued the Navy Estimates would be swollen to the extent of £3,000,000 a year. That was the real reason which induced the Committee to lengthen the period of repayment in the case of the Naval Works Bill. Could the Secretary of State for War give a similar reason for extending the period in the case of this Bill?

*MR. RITCHIE said he really could not say himself, but if he were in the position of the hon. Gentleman, as a critic, he should say that it was not a reason which ought in itself to materially influence the decision of the House of Commons. The fact of the repayment amounting to a large sum some years hence was not a sufficiently good reason to induce the Committee to depart from a sound principle. Their principle was that if it was right that the expenditure upon certain works should be spread over thirty years, then the spreading over ought to commence from the time when the expenditure was incurred. That was a sound principle.

MR. BUCHANAN said the Chancellor of the Exchequer had practically admitted that these Military Works Bills were likely to be permanent institutions. The precedent set up by this Bill and by the Naval Works Bill and the Public Offices Bill was in the direction of greater laxity of financial control.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES said he trusted that the Committee would bear with him a little, for the right hon. Gentleman had raised a new and important matter. There was no doubt the effect of these Loan Bills was to relieve the Estimates; and if that were so it should be done on a settled principle. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had made an unwarranted attack on his predecessors in office, whose conduct, he said, had been improper, absurd, and unsound.

*MR. RITCHIE: I have not said so.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES said the right hon. Gentleman had said the system in this Bill, which was entirely new, was the only sound system, and that any other way of dealing with the matter would be improper, absurd, and unsound. But a diametrically different system had been adopted by his predecessors in regard to Bills of this sort. There were no fewer than seventeen of such Acts in existence, on which the charge to be paid out of revenue this year was £6,876,000. According to the right hon. Gentleman, all those Acts were improper and unsound. Under the proposed system of spreading over the repayment, the period might be extended from thirty to fifty years, or even longer. He thought that on consideration the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whose finance was very good, and whose views generally were sound, would recognise that he had done some injustice to his predecessors.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said there was one consideration that ought to be borne in mind—viz., that they were not dealing only with an isolated Bill. These Loan Bills, unfortunately, were periodic; they were introduced every two or three years, and there would be the greatest confusion if the repayment was spread over a great number of years. It was desirable to keep the repayment within a certain limit; if there was no such limit it was quite possible that there might be expenditure still unextinguished at the end of sixty years. Moreover, these Bills would run into each other, and overlap in a way that would make control by the House of Commons almost impossible.

Mr. COURTENAY WARNER said that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had stated that the money would be repaid in thirty years from the time the building was undertaken, but the case was not when the building was undertaken but when the last expenditure on it was incurred. Take the case of the building of barracks. The contract might not be given out until five years after the Bill was passed, and it might be five years more before the building was finished, the War Office giving the contractor the hint not to push on. The system of the Bill would therefore encourage the War Office to do work piecemeal, so that it should not appear that they were doing too much at the same time. He hoped the Amendment would be accepted. It would not hurt the Bill, and would not affect the financial point of view in any way. A new system such as was now proposed should not be introduced.

Sir JOHN GORST (Cambridge University) said he desired to express his very strong regret at this further relaxation of the financial control of the House of Commons over military expenditure. The proceeding now proposed was contrary to the proceeding under any previous Bill of the kind. In all previous Bills, the repayment was to be made within thirty years of the passing of the Act. That limited the period of the relaxation of the control of the House of Commons. But in this case the limit was entirely done away with. The limit was to be not from the passing of the Act, but from the time it suited the convenience of the War Office to borrow the money. As that money might be borrowed at any time the period might extend to an indefinite number of years. No reason had been given for that. The present was a most unfortunate occasion on which to ask the House of Commons for this additional relaxation of control, because, as was pointed out on the Second Reading of the Bill, the War Office had now an unusually large sum in hand, a much larger sum than they were likely to spend in the present financial year. It was, therefore, highly probable that the borrowings under this Act would be postponed for at least a year, and possibly for a considerably longer period. He earnestly appealed to the Government to accept the Amendment. It was a matter of financial control. Previous Chancellors of the Exchequer of both Parties had been in favour of a limitation of the relaxation of control; and he appealed to the Government to accept the Amendment in order to make the Bill conformable to the precedents of former years.

Mr. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty) said he was not at all surprised that the War Office were anxious to extend the time for the repayment of the loan after having put such heavy burdens on the taxpayers. The whole system was so unbusinesslike that he must protest against it; and if his hon. friend went to a division, he would support him. He hoped, however, that the Government would accept the Amendment. He felt very strongly that the limit of thirty years for repayment should be adhered to. Nothing was worse than to dawdle about with new works. If they wanted barracks they should be put up promptly, and not be allowed to drag on year after year. He hoped the Government would accept the Amendment.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 142; Noes, 63. (Division List No. 203.)

AYES.

Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balfour, Rt. Hon A. J. (*Manch'r*
Balfour, Rt Hn Gerald W. (*Leeds*
Balfour, Kenneth R. (*Christch.*
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benj.
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Bull, William James
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Cavendish, V. C. W. (*Derbyshire*
Cecil, Evelyn (*Aston Manor*)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J. (*Birm.*
Chamberlain, Rt Hn. J. A. (*Worc*
Chapman, Edward
Cochrane, Hon. T. H. A. E.
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Corbett, T. L. (*Down, North*)

Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge
Craig, Charles Curtis (*Antrim, S*
Cranborne, Viscount
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Crossley, Rt. Hon Sir Savile
Dickson, Charles Scott
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Duke, Henry Edward
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Faber, E. B. (*Hants, W.*)
Faber, George Denison (*York*)
Fergusson, Rt Hn. Sir J. (*Man'r*
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Fisher, William Hayes
Flower, Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Fyler, John Arthur
Gardner, Ernest
Gordon, J. (*Londonderry, S.*)
Gore, Hon. S. F. Ormsby-(*Linc.*
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Greene, Hy. D. (*Shrewsbury*)
Grenfell, William Henry
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Groves, James Grimble
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Hain, Edward
Hall, Edward Marshall
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Hatch, Ernest Frederick Geo.
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
Houston, Robert Paterson
Howard, John (*Kent, Faversh'm*
Howard, J. (*Midd., Tottenham*)
Kemp, Lieut.-Col. George
Kenyon, Hn. Geo. T. (*Denbigh*

Kimber, Henry
Lambton, Hn. Frederick Wm.
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (*Glasgow*
Lawson, John Grant (*Yorks. N. R*
Lee, Arthur H. (*Hants. Fareham*
Lees, Sir Elliott (*Birkenhead*)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Fredk. N. S.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Rt Hn. Walter (*Bristol, S*)
Lowe, Francis William
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas, Reg'ld J. (*Portsmouth*)
Macdona, John Cumming
Malcolm, Ian
Maxwell, Rt Hn Sir H. E. (*Wigt'n*
Melville, Beresford Valentine
Mitchell, William (*Burnley*)
Montagu, G. (*Huntingdon*)
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Morrell, George Herbert
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
Muntz, Sir Philip A.
Murray, Rt Hn A. Graham (*Bute*
Murray, Charles J. (*Coventry*)
Palmer, Walter (*Salisbury*)
Peel, Hn Wm. Robert Wellesley
Percy, Earl
Plummer, Walter R.
Powell, Sir Francis Sharp
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Pym, C. Guy
Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
Rattigan, Sir William Henry
Reid, James (*Greenock*)
Renshaw, Sir Charles Bine

Ritchie, Rt. Hn. Chas. Thomson
Robertson, Herbert (*Hackney*)
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Samuel, Harry S. (*Limehouse*)
Sandys, Lieut.-Col. Thos. Myles
Scott, Sir S. (*Marylebone, W.*
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Shaw-Stewart, M. H. (*Renfrew*
Sinclair, Louis (*Romford*)
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smith, James Parker (*Lanarks.*
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (*Strand*
Stanley, Edward Jas. (*Somerset*
Stanley, Lord (*Lancs.*)
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
Talbot, Lord E. (*Chichester*)
Taylor, Austin (*East Toxteth*)
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Valentia, Viscount
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt. Hn. Sir William H.
Whiteley, H. (*Ashton-u.-Lyne*)
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Williams, Rt Hn J Powell-(*Birm*
Wilson, John (*Glasgow*)
Wilson-Todd, Sir W. H. (*Yorks.*)
Worsley-Taylor, Hry. Wilson
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Anstruther.

NOES

Asher, Alexander
Atherley-Jones, L.
Bowles, T. Gibson (*Lynn Regis*
Brunner, Sir John Tomlinson
Bryce, Right Hon. James
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burt, Thomas
Caldwell, James
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Channing, Francis Allston
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Colomb, Sir John Chas. Ready
Cremer, William Randal
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, Alfred (*Carmarthen*)
Dewar, John A. (*Inverness-sh.*)
Doogan, P. C.
Elibank, Master of
Farquharson, Dr. Robert
Fuller, J. M. F.
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Grant, Corrie
Griffith, Ellis J.

Harcourt, Rt. Hon. Sir Wm.
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Chas. Seale-
Hayter, Rt. Hn. Sir Arthur D.
Horniman, Frederick John
Hutchinson, Dr. Charles Fredk.
Jacoby, James Alfred
Jones, David B. (*Swansea*)
Jones, Wm. (*Carnarvonshire*)
Labouchere, Henry
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (*Cornwall*
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Lloyd-George, David
Lough, Thomas
Mappin, Sir Frederick Thorpe
Mitchell, Edw. (*Fermanagh, N*
Murphy, John
Partington, Oswald
Pease, Herbert Pike (*Darlingt'n*
Priestley, Arthur
Rickett, J. Compton
Robertson, Edmund (*Dundee*)
Russell, T. W.

Seely, Maj. J. E. B. (*Isle of Wight*
Shackleton, David James
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (*Forfarshire*)
Soares, Ernest J.
Thomas, David Alfred (*Merthyr*
Thomson, F. W. (*York, W. R.*)
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Wallace, Robert
Walton, John Lawson (*Leeds, S*
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
Wason, Eugene (*Clackmannan*
Wason, John Cathcart (*Orkney*
Weir, James Galloway
White, Luke (*York, E.R.*)
Wilson, Henry J. (*York, W.R.*
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Causton and Mr. Robert Spencer.

MR. BUCHANAN said he wished to move the omission of Sub-section (4). It was the last Amendment which he would move in an endeavour to restore the Bill to the same form as previous Bills. It was somewhat difficult to understand the sub-section; but he took it to mean that the new form of the schedule should be read into previous Military Works Acts. Among the large alterations made in this Bill as compared with previous Works Bills, not the least important was the alteration in the schedule. In the first place, as his right hon. friend the Leader of the Opposition had stated, it rendered entirely impossible any comparison from year to year of expenditure on public works under this series of Acts. That distinctly lessened the financial control which the House ought to exercise over successive War Ministers. It lessened financial control also in another way. The items were lumped together in the schedule, and that, of course, diminished the knowledge of hon. Members as regarded the work the War Office were engaged in, and its progress. Further, the power of transferring money from one item to another was larger in the present Bill than in any previous Bill, and the power of the Department to spend money for purposes of which the House was ignorant, or, at any rate, had no control over, would be greatly increased. The schedules in the Acts of 1899 and 1901 were adopted in consequence of representations in this House by his right hon. friend the Leader of the Opposition; and the right hon. Gentleman's predecessor agreed on behalf of the War Office to make the White Paper issued with the Bill a part of the Act. That gave hon. Members undoubtedly greater information than they previously had, and also increased the control of the House over expenditure. He had not heard any real justification brought forward for this change. There were two suggestions made. One was that the expenditure on barracks should be made to correspond with the new Army Corps system of the right hon. Gentleman. That would enhance knowledge of what was going on, and also the control of the House over expenditure. The other point had reference to the purchase of land; but he did not see how they would be much better off in that respect under the present Bill. There was a large sum in previous schedules which could be used for the purchase of land in order to carry out the barracks scheme. That ought to be ample. Further, there was an item on the schedule for ranges. The Government purchased a large amount of land in Salisbury Plain in which not only ranges were erected, but barracks as well. That included the large property purchased from the late Chancellor of the Exchequer; and, as far as he could judge, there had been no difficulty in regard to the purchase of land there. As no justification had been offered for departing from precedent he begged to move his Amendment.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 1, line 27, to leave out Sub-section (4)."—(*Mr. Buchanan.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the clause."

*MR. BRODRICK said that, as he had stated on the Second Reading, it would be quite impossible to accept the Amendment. Previous to the Act of 1899 when a change was pressed on his right hon. friend the Chief Secretary, it had not been the practice to state where barracks were to be built. The point was made very strongly that if the hands of the War Office were tied they would be at the mercy of everybody in the locality. It had been made the means of bleeding the Exchequer, and the War Office had to come to Parliament to ask to be released from the burden which had become intolerable. He had already stated what had occurred in the case of Salisbury Plain, and the difference between the price paid for land before it was known that the War Office was going there and the land they took by arbitration from the late Chancellor of the Exchequer, for which a reasonable price was given, on the one side, and the price forced upon them for intermediate plots of land which they had to take on arbitration when it was known that the War Office was purchasing. He did not think anybody with any practical experience of the working of the former Acts would differ from the course that was now being taken. There was nothing in the sub-section which released the Government from their promise to Parliament, but it did release them from the obligation either of spending public money at a rate they had no right to spend at, or not to spend at all. There was no device whatever for eluding any proper criticism.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN said that in his reference to the previous occasion, when the Chief Secretary for Ireland was representing the War Office, the right hon. Gentleman had omitted one fact. The theory now was that it would be fatal to the economical purchase of land if it was known where the War Office intended to erect barracks; but on that occasion a White Paper was issued giving the full information to the House of Commons, and it was called a schedule, which was rather misleading, because it was not a schedule. What they maintained was that it should have been embodied in the Bill, in order that the House of Commons should have control over the expenditure of the money.

*MR. BRODRICK said that that was just the point. When the information was given for the guidance of the Committee on the previous Bill, it was on the clear understanding that it would not be adhered to if certain conditions arose, but the right hon. Gentleman who brought in that Bill, who had great knowledge of affairs, but who had not long been in the War Office, accepted a most vicious Amendment, and from that date until now there had been endless difficulty.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN thought it rather too disrespectful to a past House of Commons and to the Government themselves to say that they accepted a vicious Amendment; but that was the vicious Amendment which they wished to enforce on the Government. They were not aware that any evil flowed from it, and they certainly thought it went far to preserve the right of control of the House of Commons, and they were not aware of any reason why they should not reserve to the House of Commons their right of control of the Government.

MR. LOUGH said he could not for the life of him understand this clause, and he had read it through and through till his head nearly ached. He should have thought the right hon. Gentleman would have given some simple explanation of it. It was a most amazing thing to him that any Government should have presented such a sentence to the House of Commons. What did it mean? It meant that all the works sanctioned by the Bills of 1897, 1899 and 1901 were not completed.

*MR. BRODRICK explained that it arranged for the allocation of unexpended money borrowed under the previous Acts.

MR. LOUGH: Did that mean that the money then voted was not all spent? It was a most dangerous thing to assent to During the last six years certain sums had been taken for certain works, and now six years afterwards they found 35 per cent. of the money granted under the Military Works Acts of 1897, 1899 and 1901 was not expended, This sub-section was brought in for its allocation. Such a thing, in his opinion, knocked the bottom out of the necessity for this Bill, and that being so, he thought it ought not to be passed without fuller consideration.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON thought the Committee was justified in asking for some fuller explanation with regard to this sub-section, which purported to repeal every schedule in every previous Military Works Act. Would the right hon. Gentleman take the Act of 1899, for instance. He proposed to repeal the schedule of that Act; would he read to the Committee the schedule he proposed to substitute for the schedule now in the Act of 1899? If the right hon. Gentleman would do that, the Committee would know where it was, but if he did not, nobody would agree to it. It was a most extraordinary piece of drafting, and would puzzle a Philadelphia lawyer, let alone the House of Commons.

MR. WEIR said he had read this sub-section over and over again and could make neither head nor tail of it. What did it all mean? He thought the Committee ought to have some explanation of it. The right hon. Gentleman had said he wanted to be relieved of the intolerable burden placed upon him by the previous Acts, but before he was relieved from the intolerable burden the right hon. Gentleman ought to give some light and leading on this matter.

SIR JOHN GORST said he rose to the assistance of his right hon. friend, as he noticed there were no lawyers in the House. The Act of 1899 was the Act which placed at the disposal of the War Office £4,000,000 to experiment on certain works shown in the schedule of that Act. The effect of this sub-section was to substitute for the schedules in the previous Acts the columns of figures in the schedule to this Bill, so that when anything was done in future under the former Acts those Acts would have to be read as if part of this schedule was incorporated in them.

*MR. BRODRICK: Hear, hear.

MR. BUCHANAN said the right hon. Gentleman in his reply a short time previously had led the Committee to believe that all the alterations and re-arrangement of the schedules had reference to work done in military districts at home, but the alteration of the schedules went a great deal further, because a great deal of the work was to be done, not at home but abroad. Now apparently all these things were to be lumped together in one item of the schedule under the heading "Naval bases and coaling stations," with the result that it was impossible to tell from year to year what the works were and the progress made in them. If the real difficulty which the right hon. Gentleman had in his mind was, as it appeared to be from the arguments he used, a difficulty in regard to the purchase of land, let him take a larger amount of money under this sub-head for the purchase of land. Then they would be in the position, so far as it was given to them to do, to review the schemes for barracks, and would still have that knowledge which they now had of the operations of the War Office.

SIR HENRY FOWLER (Wolverhampton, E.) said he could not see why the advisers of the right hon. Gentleman could not prepare an intelligent schedule showing what was proposed to be spent and how it was proposed to be spent. He rose, however, to say a word or two with regard to this so-called vicious Amendment, accepted by the right hon. Gentleman's predecessor. The House was asked to give up its control of this expenditure, on the ground that if any indication were given of the places where military works were to be erected the most extravagant prices would be demanded for the land. But the Secretary for War had a remedy for that state of things at his hand. Let him embody in the Bill the clause of the Parish Councils Act of 1894, which abolished the additional 10 per cent. given for land compulsorily purchased. He had been told, but he did not believe it, that in Scotland they got 50 per cent. for compulsory purchase. He entirely dissented from the proposition that the owner of land was entitled to 10 per cent. in addition to its value if it were purchased compulsorily. There was no reason whatever why the 10 per cent. should be given. It was purely Judge-made law. Besides, every attempt by the Government to purchase land privately by negotiation was a failure. It was like one of those Ministerial secrets which was known to everybody. Why should not the right hon. Gentleman rely solely upon the protection against extravagant demands which the law gave him? If he did not like an arbitrator, let him go to a jury.

The London County Council in carrying out their great new highway from the Strand to Holborn were overwhelmed with demands of the most preposterous prices for the buildings required to be removed, but they went before a jury, with the result that the claims were substantially reduced. The Secretary of War would have obtained the land necessary for new barracks at a great deal less money if he had gone to a jury for a settlement of the claims. Public improvements were being impeded because people were not satisfied with the fair value of their property, but required something additional for compulsory purchase. A man was entitled to the full value of his property, but not to a penny more. The House of Commons must not be deprived of its control of this class of military expenditure, which was becoming larger and larger every year; and it was also necessary that it should have in these Bills a plain, intelligible schedule. As a case of legislation by reference this out-Heroded Herod.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES said he rose to support the right hon. Gentleman opposite in the remarks he had made with regard to the position the Government had chosen to take up in connection with the purchase of land. A jury would always fix the fair value of the land. The only person who would not fix the fair value was the agent the Government employed in these matters—the land valuer. The evil of the great prices given for land required for Government purposes, arose through the reliance of the Government on valuers as arbitrators. The business of these valuers depended entirely on the fact that they always placed a higher value on land than it was worth. Yet the Government always said, when complaints were made of the extravagant prices given for land, that they had it valued by Mr. Brown or Mr. Jones "the eminent valuer"—these people were always eminent—and that they could not go behind him. They should go to a jury, as the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Wolverhampton had recommended—and then they would get the land at its fair value. Let the Government renounce for ever the land valuer and the house valuer and all their works and let them have in their own service—the Civil Service—a valuer on whom they could depend.

*MR. BRODRICK: We have such a valuer.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: Then will the Government employ him?

*MR. BRODRICK: We do on all occasions.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 154; Noes, 60. (See Division List No. 204.)

AYES.

Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Atkinson, Right Hon. John
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (*Man'r*
Balfour, Rt. Hn. G. W. (*Leeds*)
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benj.
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bigwood, James
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Bond, Edward
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Bowles, T. Gibson (*Lynn Regis*)
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Bull, William James
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Butcher, John George
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, V C W (*Derbysh.*)
Cecil, Evelyn (*Aston Manor*)
Chamberlain, Rt Hon J (*Birm*
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J. A (*Worc*
Chapman, Edward
Cochrane, Hon. T. H. A. E.
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Cook, Sir Frederick Lucas
Corbett, A. Cameron (*Glasg.*)
Corbett, T. L. (*Down, North*)
Cox, Irwin Edwd. Bainbridge
Craig, Chas. Curtis (*Antrim, S.*)
Cranborne, Viscount
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Dickson, Charles Scott
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers
Doxford, Sir Wm. Theodore
Duke, Henry Edward
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Faber, E. B. (*Hants, W.*)
Faber, George Denison (*York*)
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Ed.
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J. (*Man'r*
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Fisher, William Hayes
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Flower, Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Fyler, John Arthur
Gardner, Ernest
Gore, Hon. S. F. Ormsby-(*Linc*)
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, Hon. Geo. Joachim
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Grenfell, William Henry
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Hain, Edward
Hall, Edward Marshall
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Hatch, Ernest Frederick G.
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
Horner, Frederick William
Houston, Robert Paterson
Howard, Jno (*Kent, Faver'hm*
Howard, J. (*Midd., Tott'ham*
Jameson, Major J. Eustace
Kemp, Lieut.-Colonel George
Kenyon, Hon. Geo. T. (*Denbigh*)
Lambton, Hon. Fredk. Wm.
Laurie, Lieut.-General
Law, Andrew Bonar (*Glasgow*)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (*Liverpool*
Lawson, John Grant (*Yorks. N R*
Lee, A. H. (*Hants, Fareham*)
Lees, Sir Elliott (*Birkenhead*)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N. S.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Rt Hn. Walter (*Bristol, S*
Lowe, Francis William
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas, Reg'ld J. (*Portsmouth*)
Lyttelton, Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
Maxwell, Rt. Hn Sir H. E. (*Wig'n*
Melville, Beresford Valentine
Mitchell, William (*Burnley*)
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
Murray, Rt Hn A. Graham (*Bute*
Palmer, Walter (*Salisbury*)
Pease, H. Pike (*Darlington*)
Peel, Hn Wm. Robert Wellesley
Percy, Earl
Plummer, Walter R.
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Pym, C. Guy
Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
Rattigan, Sir William Henry
Reid, James (*Greenock*)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Renshaw, Sir Charles Bine

Ritchie, Rt. Hn. Chas. Thomson
Robertson, Herbert (*Hackney*)
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sandys, Lt.-Col. Thos. Myles
Scott, Sir S. (*Marylebone, W.*)
Seely, Mj. J. E. B. (*Isle of Wight*
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Shaw-Stewart, M. H. (*Renfrew*)
Sinclair, Louis (*Romford*)
Smith, James Parker (*Lanarks*
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (*Strand*
Stanley, Edw. Jas. (*Somerset*)
Stanley, Lord (*Lancs*)
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Stroyan, John
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Sturt, Hn. Humphrey Napier
Talbot, Lord E. (*Chichester*)
Taylor, Austin (*East Toxteth*)
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. E. M.
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Valentia, Viscount
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt. Hn. Sir William H
Whiteley, H (*Ashton-und-Lyne*
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Williams, Rt Hn J Powell-(*Birm*
Wilson, John (*Glasgow*)
Wilson-Todd, Sir W. H. (*Yorks.*)
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (*Bath*
Worsley-Taylor, Hry. Wilson
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Asher, Alexander
Atherley-Jones, L.
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burt, Thomas
Caldwell, James
Campbell-Bannerman, Sir H.
Channing, Francis Allston
Colomb, Sir John Chas. Ready
Cremer, William Randal
Dalziel, James Henry
Davies, Alfred (*Carmarthen*)
Dewar, John A. (*Inverness-sh.*)
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Doogan, P. C.
Elibank, Master of
Emmott, Alfred
Evans, Sir F. H. (*Maidstone*)
Flynn, James Christopher
Fuller, J. M. F.
Griffith, Ellis J.
Harmsworth, R. Leicester
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-
Hayter, Rt. Hon. Sir Arthur D.
Horniman, Frederick John
Hutchinson, Dr. Chas. Fredk.
Jacoby, James Alfred
Jones, David Brynmor (*Sw'nsea*
Jones, Wm. (*Carnarvonshire*)
Labouchere, Henry
Layland-Barratt, Francis
Leigh, Sir Joseph
Lloyd-George, David
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
Mappin, Sir Fredk. Thorpe
Mitchell, Edw. (*Fermanagh, N.*
Murphy, John
O'Brien, K. (*Tipperary, Mid*)
Partington, Oswald
Perks, Robert William
Priestley, Arthur
Rickett, J. Compton
Russell, T. W.
Shackleton, David James
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Soares, Ernest J.
Thomas, David A. (*Merthyr*)
Thomson, F. W. (*York, W. R.*)
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Wallace, Robert
Warner, Thos. Courtenay T.
Wason, E. (*Clackmannan*)
Wason, John Cathcart (*Orkney*
Weir, James Galloway
White, Luke (*York, E.R.*)
Wilson, Chas. H. (*Hull, W.*)
Wilson, Henry J. (*York, W.R.*)
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Robert Spencer and Mr. John Sinclair.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON said he wanted to move another Amendment in order to raise a point partly discussed in the last Amendment, with regard to an additional price being paid in respect of land taken compulsorily under the Act.

*THE CHAIRMAN ruled that the point was not relevant.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON said he proposed to incorporate in this Bill the powers contained in the Naval Works Bill dealing with compulsory purchase.

*THE CHAIRMAN said that would not come within the scope of this Bill.

SIR ELLIOT LEES (Birkenhead) asked if the War Office were prepared, in connection with the new barracks they were about to build, to provide increased accommodation for mounted troops, and especially to provide for corps of mounted infantry.

*MR. BRODRICK: I think this point would more properly be raised on the schedule.

SIR ELLIOT LEES said the clause provided for an expenditure of £5,500,000 for barracks and therefore any question as to the purposes for which barracks were to be erected was in order.

*THE CHAIRMAN ruled that this point must be raised on the schedule, otherwise those who objected to money being spent on hospitals or ranges or any other purpose might raise similar discussions. The hon. Member should bring forward his point on the specific items when it was reached.

SIR ELLIOT LEES said it was not a specific but a general item. He was in favour of spending the money, but he wished to know generally how it was to be spent.

*THE CHAIRMAN: That clearly should come on the schedule.

Clause 1 agreed to.

Schedule.

*SIR JOHN COLOMB (Great Yarmouth) said he was sorry to be compelled to trouble the House at that time of the session, and on a Friday afternoon, but the action of the Government in bringing this Bill forward at the fag-end of the session was responsible. He felt bound to take up the time of the Committee by his very strong sense of the principles involved in the Bill. He intended to propose to omit the sum of £594,000 provided for defence works. The schedule at the foot showed a total of nearly £21,000,000; that expenditure he classed under two heads, one involving questions of high policy and the other concerned in administrative matters, such as the provision for the housing and training of troops. Both classes of expenditure involved, of course, outlay for creation as well as depreciation, and in that respect they were on all fours. But the difference between defence works, and barracks and ranges was that the latter fulfilled the demands for the training of troops and created no new demands in military requirements—no new expenditure in fact, while when fortifications were built then began the real drain on the resources of the country for armaments, stores, etc. In other words barracks and ranges fulfilled military wants, while fortifications created new military wants. The House had already voted £2,870,000 in six years for defensive works, and had been denied any information as to whether the works were wanted, what was their nature, and where they were situated. In three Military Works Bills in six years the House had voted blindfold nearly 3,000,000 of money, which the War Office had spent in the manner it chose without consulting the House. This plea for concealment was ridiculous, and the Committee might well remember that the Admiralty did not conceal the details as to battleships or cruisers, or the places it was proposed to build them. But the War Office proclaimed, "We must not let the House of Commons know what we are doing or where we are expending this money." He protested against that. There was too much nonsense talked in the War Office of that kind. The policy was not due to a fear of foreign nations knowing what we were doing; it was due to a fear of criticism by the House of Commons. These defensive works, as he had said involved high questions of military policy. Forty-five years ago no Englishman ever dreamt for one moment of saying that we could defend this country by heaping up piles of earth and putting guns on top of them, while giving shelter to British troops behind them. But then the nation took fright at the utterances of certain colonels across the water. Parliament participated in the panic and Lord Palmerston jumped with the popular emotion and appointed a Royal Commission for the specific purpose of inquiry into the condition of efficiency of our fortifications and to consider the means of securing a complete state of defence by permanent fortifications. That was the first step towards revolutionising our military policy. The Commission was composed of four generals ——

*THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order. The hon. and gallant Gentleman is going too far back. Considering that since 1897 we have had three Acts of Parliament providing for defence work, I do not think the hon. Member is entitled to go back to the days of Lord Palmerston.

*SIR JOHN COLOMB said he had no desire to place himself out of order or unnecessarily intrude on the time of the House. But this £594,000 which he was proposing to omit was the last contribution to the series under the policy then started. He wished to point out how after an enormous expenditure we had only augmented the cost and destroyed the mobility of our army. If he was only to be allowed to deal with the works for which this £594,000 was asked he could say no more, for they had no information as to what works were contemplated.

*THE CHAIRMAN: I said it was unnecessary for the hon. and gallant Member to go back to the time of Lord Palmerston, when Acts of Parliament embodying the policy he objected to had been passed in the last six years.

*SIR JOHN COLOMB said the Bills mentioned were the last three of the series which commenced in the time of Lord Palmerston. He would, of course, bow to the Chairman's ruling, and would try to raise the question on the Appropriation Bill. Since he was debarred from dealing with this question of policy, which was at the root of their present enormous expenditure, perhaps he might be allowed to point out what the position of our army was in those days. We were then spending £14,800,000; we had 92,000 men in India, and the number of regular troops available for service anywhere was 143,362. Now we had 17,000 less troops in India; our military expenditure had doubled, and the number of troops available for general field service was 144,083. So after spending millions on fortifications the net result was an increase of their mobile army by 721 men, while the annual expenditure had been doubled. That was the outcome of a new departure, made in a hurry. There was more behind. In those days we had a free force available for general service. Now the men were locked up under our policy of fortifications. It might be suggested that the conditions now prevailing were wholly different from those which obtained before the policy of fortifications was entered upon. But in what way were they different? Happily they had during the past few years driven the War Office from pillar to post, with the result that there had been a diminution in the expenditure on defensive works. At one time defensive works were to be constructed for the protection of London, but they had been abandoned. These works were based on the supposition of an attack by a naval force upon our ports. But that was all changed now. The cost of warships, and the relative importance of a single ship to the whole national naval power, had enormously increased, with the result that whereas in former times ships might be risked for a comparatively small object, no admiral or captain would now risk his ship except for a decisive result. The probability, therefore, was a reduction of any chance of ships attacking fixed points. The speed of ships had also increased, and the uncertainty of the movements of the opposing ships hampered the use of ships as an attacking force. Obviously ships would not be risked in an attack on a fixed point, to produce any effect upon which would take some hours, when they were liable, through the agency of the telegraph, to have brought upon them the ships of the defending power. But the most important element was the reduction of the carrying power of ships in regard to ammunition. The capacity was so restricted that not a single round of ammunition could be spared, except for some definite result, and it was preposterous to suppose that ships would use their ammunition in an attack on a fixed point and then have to run the risk of being caught ammunitionless by the opposing fleet. A further consideration was the limit of life of modern naval guns. The effect of every modern improvement was to make fortifications less necessary, and naval effective power more necessary. The War Office constructed these works on naval assumptions without naval justification, and that was why he objected to them. This mad race in expenditure could not go on. He defied the Secretary of State for War to deal with this matter from the point of view of naval strategy. No doubt he would say that it was done with the advice of the naval authorities, but those authorities would give very different advice if the Admiralty had to pay for it. The system of naval advice was simply that the War Office prepared plans on naval assumptions; they then called in the naval advisers and said "If a ship was here and another there, would this do?" But the point of the whole thing was that the ships would not be there at all. During the last forty years there had been a series of wars, four of which involved operations both naval and military. In those four wars four national fleets have been wiped out, but in not a single one of these wars did fortifications or fixed defences play any material part. In spite of the lessons of these modern wars, the War Office still went on wasting money on and tying up the Army in fortifications, simply because forty years ago a Commission which sat for a few days said that this fortification policy should be adopted. He felt it his bounden duty to oppose this waste of military power and national money, and therefore begged to move.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 2, line 9, to leave out the figures '£594,000' "—(*Sir John Colomb.*)

Amendment negatived.

Bill reported, without Amendment; to be read the third time upon Monday next.

NAVAL WORKS BILL.

(Considered in Committee.)

(In the Committee.)

[Sir FREDERICK BANBURY (Camberwell, Peckham) in the Chair.]

1. Schedule—

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) called attention to the estimated expenditure on the Britannia Royal Naval College for 1903-4 and 1904-5, which was £177,390. His point was that this very large expenditure was undertaken on the ground that it would be sufficient provision for the whole of the naval cadets for the Navy. In addition, another large sum would have to be provided for Osborne College. Surely, in view of that, they ought to be saving something on Britannia College. Perhaps, however, a much larger number of cadets had to be provided for.

[Mr. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith) at this stage took the Chair.]

THE CIVIL LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. PRETYMAN, Suffolk, Woodbridge) said that 260 cadets was the provision under the old scheme; but under the new scheme of naval training the total number was about 800, and there would be 400 cadets at each college.

MR. CALDWELL (Lanarkshire, Mid) said in reference to the sum of £200,000 for the naval establishment at Rosyth, that it had been ascertained that the property had been advertised for the last ten or twelve years to feu, but not a single application to erect buildings had been received by the owner. When the matter was before the Committee it was stated by the Government that they had asked Sir A. Binnie of Glasgow to give his opinion of Rosyth as a feuing site. The proprietor had been advertising this as feuing land for ten or twelve years without getting an offer, so that the Government in paying for it as land suitable for dwelling-houses had paid in respect of a value which it did not possess. The best proof that it had no feuing value was to be found in the fact that there was no demand for building land in the district. If the Government had made inquiry they would have found that in the neighbourhood a private individual bought 2,200 acres, including the minerals, for £38,000. The rental of that land was £1,000 for the surface and £800 or £900 for the minerals. The rental of the land bought by the Government was £1,600 a year, and they paid £122,000 for it, excluding the minerals. It was clear, therefore, that nothing could be more extravagant than the price paid for the land. They were under no compulsion to give an exorbitant price. They could have put into operation the Land Clauses Act and they would then have been able to get it at a fair price as between a willing buyer and a willing seller. Lord Linlithgow knew perfectly well with whom he was dealing. The Government put on valuers to value the land as a feuing property. It was a mere hollow pretence to say that this was a private sale upon the report of valuers. They could get valuers to value anything at any price. They could not get over the plain common-sense of it, that they were paying eighty years' purchase of the rental when nobody else paid more than twenty-six years' purchase. How could they treat 1,600 acres as feuing property merely because there was a distant possibility of feuing half-a-dozen acres? In point of fact there was no demand for dwelling houses there, as was proved by the fact of a man having land in the district having tried in vain to feu it for ten or twelve years. Again, they were told that the Admiralty had been making borings with the object of seeing what was the nature of the foundations. He had been making inquiry, and was informed that there was a hundred feet of sludge or clay before they got to the solid ground. If that were true it was exceedingly serious, because in a naval base or dockyard they would have to deal with heavy buildings, and heavy machinery. Assuming that the borings showed that there was no solid foundation to be got under a hundred feet digging, obviously the site would be practically useless for the purposes of the Government.

MR. COURTENAY WARNER (Staffordshire, Lichfield) said that there were two items on the schedule, "coaling facilities and fuel storage," and "electric lights and electric power." What he wanted to know was why these were put separately under different headings and——

*THE CHAIRMAN said he did not think hon. Members were entitled to go back over all the items when the question was that the schedule as a whole should be added to the Bill. Each item had already been considered and discussed, and hon. Members would not be in order in going back on the whole ground already covered.

MR. COURTENAY WARNER said he wished to know if he would be in order in moving the omission of the last two items.

*THE CHAIRMAN: The Question before the Committee is that the schedule, as a whole, be added to the Bill.

MR. COURTENAY WARNER said that in that case he would merely point out that there were works mentioned in the schedule which were not permanent works. There was the item for electricity, for instance, which would be worn out long before the loan was repaid. He thought it most improper that loans should be used for the purposes of temporary works; and he would, therefore, object to the schedule as a whole.

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.) said that the schedule was a most extraordinary one in some ways. Many of the estimates were not estimates of the total cost; and that could not be regarded with satisfaction. The Committee ought not to agree to such items without knowing what the total cost was to be. He thought it was understood that some of the larger items should be further explained. The Chatham item especially should be explained.

MR. PRETYMAN said he had nothing to add to what he had already stated, except that the plans of Rosyth would be available to hon. Members.

MR. CALDWELL asked if it was the case that Lord Linlithgow had been advertising Rosyth for ten or twelve years, and could not get a purchaser. Then as to the boring operations, was it a fact that 100 feet had to be sunk before anything solid was reached. If information could not be given on these points now, it ought to be forthcoming on the Third Reading.

MR. PRETYMAN said he could not pretend to set himself up against the hon. Gentleman as an authority on boring. The borings would be carried to the proper depth; and, as regarded the land, portions of it had been feued within the last few days.

MR. COURTENAY WARNER said he had received no reply in reference to the inclusion of temporary works in the schedule, against which he protested.

MR. LOUGH said he wished to know, with regard to Rosyth, if the Government had any objection to produce the valuers' report on which the Admiralty acted. He also hoped an explanation would be given with reference to the items for electricity and other temporary works in the schedule for which money ought not to be borrowed.

*THE CHAIRMAN: I really must again protest against hon. Gentlemen discussing each of these items separately, after we have gone through them all. The object of going through the items would be frustrated if hon. Gentlemen were to discuss each item again. I must remind the Committee that the only question now before the Committee is that this be the schedule of the Bill.

Bill reported, without Amendment; to be read the third time upon Monday next.

SOUTH AFRICAN LOANS BILL.

(Considered in Committee.)

(In the Committee.)

[MR. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith,) in the Chair.]

*SIR A. HAYTER (Walsall) called attention to an item of £14,000,000 for the purchase of the Transvaal and Orange River Railways. He pointed out that a sum of £1,000,000 was advanced to these railways during the war for the purpose of obtaining rolling stock, but when the question came up in the Public Accounts Committee they found an additional sum of £577,000 had been advanced by the military authorities, of which £161,000 had also been used for the purchase of rolling stock. He desired to know whether this additional sum had been considered in considering the terms for the purchase of these railways.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean) called attention to the statements published in a book just published, written by Sir Woodhouse Richardson, who was at the head of the Supply Department of the Army Service Corps during the war in South Africa, as to the frightful amount of waste that had taken place, and the extent to which accounts had been paid twice over. The revelations in that book were of a frightful nature, and he merely desired to call attention to it.

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. RITCHIE, Croydon) said he had not yet made himself acquainted with the book referred to by the right hon. Baronet.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE: It is only just published.

*MR. RITCHIE said the Government expected shortly to be able to come to terms with both shareholders and debenture-holders in the settlement of South African railway claims. The £14,000,000 mentioned in the schedule of the Bill was only an estimate of what the Government expected to pay for the acquisition of the railways. There was no doubt that the £1,000,000 advanced for the purchase of rolling stock would be received back. With regard to the additional sum expended on rolling stock, to which the right hon. Baronet called attention in reference to the report of the Committee on Public Accounts, he was now in communication with the Colonial Office, and he would endeavour to give information on a subsequent stage of the Bill. He was unable to do so at present.

Bill reported, without Amendment; to be read the third time upon Monday next.

EMPLOYMENT OF CHILDREN BILL.

As amended (by the Standing Committee) further considered.

MR. COURTENAY WARNER (Staffordshire, Lichfield) said the Amendment he proposed to move was to make the law permanent by giving these powers to any borough that should become large enough. If this Bill had passed 100 years ago, for instance, Birmingham would not have the powers because then it had not 20,000 inhabitants. When a borough grew to 20,000 inhabitants the conditions of life of the children changed from rural to urban and the powers given to the County Council were no longer sufficient. He begged to move.

Amendment proposed to the Bill—

"In page 5, line 13, after the words 'nineteen hundred and one' to insert the words 'or any subsequent census.'"—(*Mr. Courtenay Warner.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted in the Bill."

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. COCHRANE (Ayrshire, N.) said the census obtained for the purposes of this Bill was the same as that obtained for the Education Act. The authority under that Act rested on the census of 1901. It would be extremely inconvenient to have a different authority for this Bill. Of course ultimately it might be necessary to have a redistribution scheme over the whole country.

MR. COURTENAY WARNER said he had no wish to press the matter further.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

THE SOLICITOR-GENERAL FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. SCOTT DICKSON (Glasgow, Bridgton): I beg to move.

Amendment proposed to the Bill—

"In page 5, line 24, to leave out Sub-section (1)."—(*Mr. Scott Dickson.*)

Amendment agreed to.

MR. COURTENAY WARNER said he had an Amendment to propose in line 34, with the object of bringing the English and Scotch systems into uniformity. He thought it would be an advantage to both countries.

Amendment proposed to the Bill—

"In page 5, line 34, after the word 'mean' to insert the words 'in the case of a school board with a population, according to the census of nineteen hundred and one, of over ten thousand the school board.'"—(*Mr. Courtenay Warner.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted in the Bill."

MR. SCOTT DICKSON said the change would be inconvenient, so far as Scotch Local Government was concerned.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

SIR CHARLES RENSHAW (Renfrewshire, W.) formally proposed an Amendment of Clause 12.

MR. CALDWELL asked if it were in order. Was it competent to make such a financial change on Report?

MR. SPEAKER: I have made inquiries and I gather that the Amendment does not alter the incidence of rating.

Amendment proposed to the Bill—

"In page 6, line 28, to leave out the words 'general purposes rate,' and insert the words 'public health general assessment leviable within the county or a district of the county, provided that in any Royal, Parliamentary, or police burgh having, according to the Census of nineteen hundred and one, a population of less than seven thousand, a proportion of such expenses corresponding to the valuation of such burgh shall be paid to the County Council out of the public health general assessment leviable in such burgh, in compliance with a requisition to that effect to be sent to the town council of such burgh annually not later than the month of October in each year.'"—(*Sir Charles Renshaw.*)

Amendment agreed to.

Amendment proposed to the Bill—

"In page 6, line 30, to leave out from the word 'assessment,' to the word 'and,' in line 33."—(*Sir Charles Renshaw.*)

Amendment agreed to.

Amendments proposed to the Bill—

"In page 7, line 1, to leave out sub-section (3), and insert the words—The expression 'local authority' means in the case of an urban district with a population according to the census of nineteen hundred and one of over five thousand, the District Council and elsewhere the County Council."

"In page 7, line 4, after the word 'Proceedings' to insert the words 'under this Act.'"

"In page 7, line 5, to leave out the words 'Corporation or County Council,' and insert the words 'local authority.'"

"In page 7, line 6, to leave out the word 'the' and insert the word 'a.'"

"In page 7, line 8, to leave out the words 'and costs to be.'"

"In page 7, line 8, after the word 'incurred' to insert the words 'by a local authority.'"

"In page 7, line 9, to leave out from the word 'defrayed' to end of clause, and insert the words 'in the case of the Council of a county borough or of a District Council out of any rate or fund applicable to the purposes of the Public Health (Ireland) Act, 1878, and in the case of a County Council out of the county fund, and in such case the amount required therefor may be raised by means of the poor rate equally over so much of the county as does not comprise any urban district the council whereof is constituted a local authority under this Act.'"—(*Mr. Attorney-General for Ireland.*)

Amendments agreed to.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. AKERS DOUGLAS, Kent, St. Augustine's): I hope the House will allow the Bill to be read a third time. It has been generally agreed to on both sides, and the alterations made in it have been very slight.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON (Dundee): Do the Government propose to take any more business?

*MR. AKERS DOUGLAS: Only the Patriotic Fund Bill.

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.) pointed out that hon. Members had facilitated the progress of business in every way that day, and might be inclined to allow this Bill to be read a third time, but it was hardly fair to keep them at work much longer The Government might well be satisfied with the business done.

Bill read the third time, and passed.

PATRIOTIC FUND BILL.

(Considered in Committee.)

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith) in the Chair.]

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.) moved to report Progress on the ground that many hon. Members interested in the Bill were not present. The Second Reading was passed, he reminded the Committee, on the understanding that ample discussion would be allowed on the Committee stage.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Chairman do report Progress and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. Lough.*)

*MR. RITCHIE said the Government were quite unable to accept the Motion. It was really for the general convenience of the House that they should get forward with the business, as unless they did so it would be impossible to bring the session to an end at the date desired.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON pointed out that the Bill, though it might not be described as a controversial measure, had really not been considered at all. It was a very important Bill, and the Government would be well-advised to accept the Motion to report Progress.

* SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean) said the schedule was a most difficult one to discuss, and, although there were only two Amendments on the Paper, questions would probably arise requiring more time than could be given to-day. He suggested that if the Bill was taken at all the Government should be content with the clauses, and leave the schedule to be dealt with subsequently.

*MR. RITCHIE said there was no intention of keeping the House very late, but they might as well make the best use of the time.

MR. DALZIEL (Kirkcaldy Burghs) suggested that to get the clauses of this Bill and the Resolution setting up the Committee in connection with the Sugar Convention (expenses and duties) would be a fair compromise.

*MR. RITCHIE appealed to the Committee to deal with the Bill as far as they could instead of wasting time on a division.

Question put, and negatived.

Clause 1 agreed to.

Clause 2:—

THE CIVIL LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. PRETYMAN (Suffolk, Woodbridge) moved the omission of line 16, the reason being that at present there were a number of dependents of Crimean veterans receiving pensions from the fund, but whose fathers did not lose their lives in the service of the Crown. Unless the Amendment were made these recipients would lose the pensions.

SIR A. HAYTER (Walsall) said there were on the fund 1,300 widows of men who served in the Crimea but did not die in the service, and these would all be struck off unless the Amendment were made.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 1, to leave out line 16."—(*Mr. Pretyman.*)

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 2, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 3 :—

MR. PRETYMAN moved to omit the word "permanent" from line 20. The object of the Amendment was not to confer benefit on officers at present in the employment of the Patriotic Commissioners, but the new body could not take any action until after 1st January next year, and the Patriotic Commission would cease to exist on 31st December this year. There would thus be an interregnum, and in order to carry on the continuity of the work the omission of the word "permanent" was advisable.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 1, line 20, to leave out the word 'permanent.'"—(*Mr. Pretyman.*)

*Sir A. HAYTER supported the Amendment. Under the new corporation there would be a great deal more work to do, and there was not the slightest danger of the men not being taken over.

Amendment agreed to.

Mr. HAYES FISHER (Fulham) said the words he wished to propose confined the provision to the legal rights of and position of those who might be under the expectation of pensions. Those who had followed the history of the Patriotic Commissioners knew that a good deal of complaint had been directed against them for granting certain pensions, and using the money which might have been devoted to more deserving applicants. He begged to move.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 1, line 22, after the word 'that' to insert the words 'the legal position and rights of.'"—(*Mr. Hayes Fisher.*)

Mr. PRETYMAN said this Amendment had apparently been moved under a misapprehension. The pensions dealt with were not really Civil Service pensions, to which they had a right by law, and they could only be awarded by the permission of the Treasury. If those words which had been proposed were inserted, he did not think those persons would get any pensions at all.

Mr. HAYES FISHER said his Amendment was not moved under a misapprehension, but under an apprehension that understandings might have been arrived at which ought not to be carried out by the new body. The new body ought to have a perfectly free hand, only controlled by the legal rights they at present possessed. So long as some language was introduced which confirmed their rights to their legal rights, and so long as the new body would not be bound to do anything more than give them the legal rights which they at present enjoyed, he should be satisfied. Would the hon. Member bring up some such words on the Report stage?

Mr. PRETYMAN said he sympathised with his hon. friend's object, and he should be glad to refer the matter to the law officers of the Crown to see what words could be devised to carry out this object.

Mr. LOUGH said he thought the proposal of the hon. Member for Fulham was a good one, although he agreed that the objection raised by the Civil Lord was a strong word. He understood that his hon. friend's Amendment would be considered.

Mr. PRETYMAN said that the question would be considered before the Report stage.

Mr. HAYES FISHER asked permission to withdraw his Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Clause 3, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 4 and 5 agreed to.

Schedule :—

Mr. COURTENAY WARNER moved to report Progress, because he was sure there was a very strong feeling in regard to this part of the Bill.

Motion made, and Question proposed—

"That the Chairman do report Progress; and ask leave to sit again."—(*Mr. Courtenay Warner.*)

*Sir CHARLES DILKE said there was a good deal of doubt about the schedule, and if it were taken on Tuesday they would have time to consider it, and possibly it would not then take up much time. If the Government insisted upon taking it now there would certainly be a debate upon it.

Question put, and agreed to.

Committee Report Progress; to sit again upon Monday next.

SUGAR CONVENTION [EXPENSES AND DUTIES].

(Considered in Committee.)

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. J. W. Lowther (Cumberland, Penrith) in the Chair.]

Motion made and Question proposed, "That it is expedient to authorise the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of a share of the expenses of the Permanent Commission and of any Expenses in connection with the attendance of delegates at the Commission, which may be payable under any Act of the present session to make provision for giving effect to a Convention signed the 5th day of March, 1902, in relation to sugar. That the duties payable under Section 2 of The Finance Act, 1901, or any Act amending the same, shall be taken on the delivery of any article from any factory or refinery, which in pursuance of any Act of the present session is made subject to the supervision of the Commissioners of Customs or Commissioners of Inland Revenue, and shall be the same as those payable on the like articles on importation."—(*Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer.*)

Mr. LOUGH (Islington, W.) said it was extremely difficult to criticise the Resolution on hearing it read. This Resolution illustrated the impropriety of the House being asked to consider proposals which did not appear on the Paper. There was no amount of money mentioned. It was a Resolution pledging them to find the expenses of the Permanent Commission, which was the most humiliating body they had ever taken part in. A certain amount of money had been paid to the gentleman who attended the Conference.

*The CHAIRMAN: I do not think the character and ability of the gentleman who attended the Conference can be raised on this Resolution.

Mr. LOUGH said that would certainly arise a large question. The latter part of the Resolution seemed to be like another Finance Bill. He supposed the Chancellor of the Exchequer understood it, but certainly none of the rest of them did. It seemed to him a strong Resolution, and it would be better that they should postpone their criticisms until they saw it on the Paper.

Mr. DALZIEL (Kirkcaldy Burghs) said he thought the Government were aware that they were only beginning a pretty protracted fight. He understood that if they adopted the Resolution now they would have an opportunity of discussing it on another occasion.

*Sir CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean) asked what further opportunity there would be for discussing the Resolution.

*The CHANCELLOR of the EXCHEQUER (Mr. Ritchie, Croydon) said there would be a Report stage of the Resolution. The first part of the Resolution spoke for itself. The second part was simply this. The present system was to levy duty on sugar when imported. When the new system came into force the duty would be levied on all refined sugar coming out of bond.

Mr. LOUGH said if they did not put the factories in bond there would be no reason to change the mode of collecting the duty in this country. If the Chancellor of the Exchequer would consider the matter fully, he might find a way of carrying out the requirements of the Convention without putting the factories in bond.

*Mr. RITCHIE said they could not possibly levy duty on the raw sugar and comply with the Convention. If they were to levy duty upon sugar as it came in, they would have to assume how much of it would be refined sugar. Instead of that they proposed to levy duty on the refined sugar coming out. There could be no doubt as to what was refined and what was not refined.

Question put.

Committee divided:—Ayes, 89; Noes, 29. (Division List No. 205).

AYES.

Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Atkinson, Right Hon. John
Bain, Colonel James Robert
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (*Man'r*
Balfour, Rt. Hn. G. W. (*Leeds*
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bathurst, Hon. Allen Benj.
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Bigwood, James

Blundell, Colonel Henry
Cavendish, V. C. W. (*Derbyshire*
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J. A. (*Worc*
Cochrane, Hon. T. H. A. E.
Colomb, Sir John Chas. Ready
Corbett, A. Cameron (*Glasg.*)
Craig, Charles C. (*Antrim, S.*)
Cranborne, Viscount
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Dickson, Charles Scott
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers
Doxford, Sir William Theodore
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Faber, E. B. (*Hants, W.*)
Faber, George Denison (*York*)
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Ed.
Fergusson, Rt Hn Sir J. (*Manc'r*
Fielden, Edward Brocklehurst
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
Forster, Henry William
Fyler, John Arthur
Gardner, Ernest
Gordon, J. (*Londonderry, S.*)
Goschen, Hon. George Joachim
Gray, Ernest (*West Ham*)
Grenfell, William Henry
Hall, Edward Marshall
Hatch, Ernest Frederick G.
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
Lambton, Hon. Fredk. Wm.
Law, Andrew Bonar (*Glasgow*)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (*Liverpool*)
Lawson, John Grant (*Yorks. NR*
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Rt. Hn. W. (*Bristol, S.*
Lowe, Francis William
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lyttelton, Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
M'Arthur, Charles (*Liverpool*)
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Murray, Rt. Hn A Graham (*Bute*
Murray, Charles J. (*Coventry*)
Percy, Earl
Plummer, Walter R.
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Reid, James (*Greenock*)
Renshaw, Sir Charles Bine
Ritchie, Rt Hon. Chas. Thomson
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford-
Seely, Maj. J. E. B (*Isle of Wight*
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Shaw-Stewart, M. H. (*Renfrew*
Smith, Abel H. (*Hertford, East*
Smith, Jas. Parker (*Lanarks.*)
Smith, Hn. W. F. D. (*Strand*)
Stanley, Lord (*Lancs.*)
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir Jn. M.
Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
Talbot, Lord E. (*Chichester*)
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Valentia, Viscount
Walrond, Rt. Hn. Sir Wm. H.
Wilson, John (*Glasgow*)
Wilson-Todd, Sir W. H. (*Yorks.*
Wodehouse. Rt. Hn. E. R. (*Bath*
Worsley-Taylor, Hry. Wilson
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart-
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Caldwell, James
Channing, Francis Allston
Cremer, William Randal
Dalziel, James Henry
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Emmott, Alfred
Griffith, Ellis J.
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-
Hayter, Rt Hon Sir Arthur D.
Horniman, Frederick John
Hutchinson, Dr. Charles Fredk.
Jacoby, James Alfred
Jones, William (*Canarvonshire*
Kilbride, Denis
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
Mitchell, Edw. (*Fermanagh, N.*
Murphy, John
O'Brien, P. J. (*Tipperary, N.*)
O'Mara, James
Partington, Oswald
Robertson, Edmund (*Dundee*)
Russell, T. W.
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sullivan, Donal
Warner, Thos. Courtenay T.
Weir, James Galloway
White, Luke (*York, E.R.*)

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. John Sinclair and Mr. Robert Spencer.

Resolved, That it is expedient to authorise the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of a share of the expenses of the Permanent Commission and of any expenses in connection with the attendance of delegates at the Commission, which may be payable under any Act of the present session to make provision for giving effect to a Convention signed the 5th day of March, 1902, in relation to Sugar. That the duties payable under section two of The Finance Act, 1901, or any Act amending the same, shall be taken on the delivery of any article from any factory or refinery, which in pursuance of any Act of the present session is made subject to the supervision of the Commissioners of Customs or Commissioners of Inland Revenue, and shall be the same as those payable on the like articles on importation.

Resolution to be reported upon Monday next.

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE.

Fourth Report brought up, and read.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 304.]

PUBLIC ACCOUNTS COMMITTEE.

Fifth Report, with Minutes of Evidence, brought up, and read.

Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 305.]

PATENT OFFICE EXTENSION BILL.

Ordered, That Sir Joseph Lawrence and Mr. Courtenay Warner be discharged, and that Sir William Rattigan and Mr. Luke White be added to the Committee.—(*Sir A. Acland-Hood.*)

Whereupon, in pursuance of the Order of the House of the 28th day of July, Mr. Speaker adjourned the House without Question put.

Adjourned at twenty minutes after Seven o'clock till Monday next.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Monday, 3rd August, 1903.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Chard Corporation Gas and Electricity Bill [H.L.]; Rochester Corporation Tramways and Improvements Bill [H.L.]. Commons' amendments considered, and agreed to.

Strabane and Letterkenny Railway Bill, now Strabane, Raphoe, and Convoy Railway Bill. Reported from the Select Committee, with amendments.

Great Central Railway Bill; Gateshead Corporation Bill; South Yorkshire Joint Railways Bill; North Eastern Railway Bill; Sheffield Corporation Bill; Cork Harbour Bill. Read 3^{a}, with the Amendments, and passed, and returned to the Commons.

Employment of Children Bill; Wick and Pulteney Harbours Order Confirmation Bill. Brought from the Commons.

Irvine and District Water Board Order Confirmation Bill [H.L.]; Kip's Patents Bill [H.L.]. Returned from the Commons agreed to.

Education Board Provisional Order Confirmation (London) Bill [H.L.]; Gas and Water Orders Confirmation Bill [H.L.]. Returned from the Commons agreed to, with Amendments: The said Amendments to be considered To-morrow.

Bristol Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Maryport Harbour Bill [H.L.]; Manchester Corporation Bill [H.L.]. Returned from the Commons agreed to, with Amendments.

Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Tramways Bill [H.L.]; West Bromwich Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Hove, Worthing, and District Tramways Bill [H.L.]; South-Eastern and London, Chatham, and Dover Railways Bill [H.L.]; Scottish Ontario and Manitoba Land Company Bill [H.L.]. Returned from the Commons agreed to, with Amendments: The said Amendments considered, and agreed to.

Bath Corporation Water Bill; Dublin, Wicklow, and Wexford Railway Bill. Returned from the Commons, with the Amendments agreed to.

Bournemouth Gas and Water Bill [H.L.]. Returned from the Commons agreed to, with an Amendment: The said Amendment considered, and agreed to.

Carmarthenshire Electric Power Bill [H.L.]. Returned from the Commons with the Amendment to which the Lords have disagreed, not insisted on.

Wick and Pulteney Harbours Order Confirmation Bill. Read 1^{a}; to be printed, and (pursuant to the Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899) deemed to have been read 2^{a} (The Lord Balfour); and reported from the Committee; and to be read 3^{a} on Thursday next. (No. 185.)

Tramways Orders Confirmation (No. 1) Bill [H.L.]: Tramway Orders Confirmation (No. 2) Bill [H.L.]. Commons' Amendments considered (according to order), and agreed to.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (THIRTY-FIRST ANNUAL REPORT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD, 1901–1902).

Supplement in continuation of the Report of the Medical Officer for 1901-1902 on Lead Poisoning and Water Supplies. Volume II.

CUNARD STEAMSHIP COMPANY, LIMITED.

Agreement, dated 30th July, 1903, between the Admiralty, the Board of Trade, and the Postmaster-General, of the one part, and the Cunard Steamship Company, Limited, of the other part, and Treasury Minute thereon, dated 31st July, 1903, together with the said Company's memorandum and articles of association, and of a draft trust deed for securing debenture stock:

Presented (by command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

EMPLOYMENT OF CHILDREN BILL.

Read 1^{a}; to be printed; and to be read 2^{a} To-morrow.—(*The Lord Belper*) (No. 184.)

An Asterisk (*) at the commencement of a Speech indicates revision by the Member

IRISH LAND BILL.

[SECOND READING.]

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

THE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (The Duke of DEVONSHIRE): My Lords, I have had some difficulty in considering what kind of statement I ought to make in moving the Second Reading of this Bill. The Bill is a very long one, extending to 100 clauses. It contains constant references to the existing Irish land law, and many of its clauses are of a highly technical nature. Some of them are, indeed, necessarily of a complicated character, and I am not sure that I fully understand the exact bearing of all of them. Therefore I certainly should despair of being able to make them all intelligible to any one who did not already possess a very complete knowledge of the subject. All I can attempt to do, therefore, will be to explain some, and only some, of the main reasons which have induced the Government to produce this Bill; and in discharging this task I thought that it might conduce to the saving of your Lordships' time, and enable me better to condense what I have got to say, if I were to prepare some notes of what I want to lay before your Lordships at the risk of exposing myself to the possible charge of reading my speech.

If I were to follow strictly the former precedents I conceive that I ought to introduce this measure by entering into some review of the history of Irish Land Acts during a period of now more than thirty years. I ought, perhaps, to enter into a general, if not detailed, description of between thirty and forty Acts of Parliament, Acts dealing with the statutory position of owners and occupiers of land in Ireland, in regard to compensation for disturbance, fixity of tenure, right of sale, and, above all, the determination of rent. I ought, perhaps, also to attempt to describe the machinery which has been set up, and which has been repeatedly amended, for settling those relations, for determining them in the first instance and for deciding on appeals when the determination has proved in the first instance unsatisfactory to either party. I might also be expected to give some account of the extent to which these various Acts have fulfilled the intentions of those who carried them through Parliament; and it might be my painful duty to touch on the history of such subjects as the "No Rent" manifesto, the Plan of Campaign, the agitation carried on by the Irish Land League, the evicted tenants question, and, last of all, perhaps, on the agitation in Ulster. I ought further to describe the succession of Land Purchase Acts, ranging from the Bright clauses contained in the Act of 1870, which provided for the advance by the State of two-thirds of the purchase money, to later Acts, which advanced that amount to three-fourths of the purchase money, down to the Act known as the Ashbourne Act, which permitted the advance of the whole sum.

I shall not attempt to enter upon any such task. In the first place I feel that I should not be competent to perform it with any approach to completeness. It is quite true that many years ago I was rather closely connected with Irish land legislation, and subsequently to that period that I have had from time to time occasion to interest myself in some incidents relating to it. But it is now a very long time since I was closely associated with Irish administration, and I confess that my acquaintance with some of its later developments is very far from complete. I think it may be enough for me to say that this series of Land Acts for regulating the relations between landlord and tenant, the most important of which have been those dealing with the fixing of rents—that series which was originated in 1881 by Mr. Gladstone in an Act with which the noble Earl opposite and myself were closely connected—as amended or altered by other enactments, although they may have prevented worse evils, have not succeeded in establishing either agrarian peace or agricultural prosperity in Ireland. They have not prevented the constant recurrence of agitation, sometimes culminating in violence, and, even in the absence of open agitation, they have not prevented the continuance of the rent war which has been carried on up to the present day, and, I am afraid, even in a greater degree than ever at the present day, in the Courts of law.

This perpetual recourse either to agitation or litigation, rather than to the exercise of their skill and energy, has paralysed, and is paralysing, the chief Irish industry; and, as Mr. Wyndham said in another place, the Irish landlords are being financially, and the Irish occupiers morally, ruined by the continuance of this state of things. The burden on the public Exchequer for the maintenance of machinery for carrying on this litigation and for the repression of open disorder is a burden which has been constantly increasing up to the present time. I shall not now enlarge on that; but I wish to point out specially with regard to this matter that Irish land purchase legislation has so far proved uniformly successful. For some reason or other, however, the progress of this policy of occupying ownerships seems to have been arrested and is not likely to succeed as things are, although there have been 80,000 purchasers.

I turn now to the attitude of public opinion in Ireland during last autumn and winter. The Bill introduced last year in the other House of Parliament was rejected by the leaders of the Nationalist Party as inadequate, and the Government were unable to give time for its discussion as a contentious measure, and the Bill had accordingly to drop. Subsequently, attempts were made, without very much success, to revive an active land agitation. At the same time there was a dissentient minority in the Nationalist Party which was openly attacking the leaders for the rejection of that measure. It was known that throughout Ireland there did exist a large body of feeling in the same direction and that a real, strong, although somewhat vague desire pervaded all classes, a desire that some means should be found to end this land, or rent, war. Perhaps the first public expression of this feeling took place at the meeting of Irish landowners convened in October last year. I shall not quote at length the resolutions passed at that convention and will give the effect of only a few of them. The resolutions made it clear that the landlords had abandoned all hopes of obtaining compensation for injuries they thought they had suffered from past legislation. They declared on behalf of those they represented that landlords who had not yet sold were resolved not to part with their estates on terms in which additional loss would be incurred, and they called for the introduction of a comprehensive land purchase measure, the introduction of which had twice been announced in the speech from the Throne. They further indicated the conditions by which this change, though not of their own seeking, might be carried through without expense or additional loss to themselves, and in order to make these acceptable to the tenants they suggested that the purchase instalments should be reduced from 4 to 3¼ per cent. They made detailed recommendations with which I need not trouble your Lordships.

Still more important was a meeting held last winter, known as the Irish Land Conference, at which representatives of both landlords and tenants took part. I am sure that my noble friend Lord Dunraven, who presided over that conference with so much ability and whose exertions in this cause we recognise, deserves the thanks of all who are interested in the welfare of Ireland. I am sure Lord Dunraven would not himself say that the report of the proceedings at this conference, or the resolutions passed at the conference, contained, or professed to contain, a definite and complete scheme. The importance of that conference consisted in the fact that both parties, as represented there, assented to principles the assent to which is essential to any settlement. Their acceptance of these principles did not in itself constitute a scheme, or even make any scheme possible, but without that acceptance of these principles no scheme at all would have been possible. I shall, as regards the conference, as with the convention, only give the effect of some of the most important resolutions. They said a satisfactory settlement of the land question could only be effected by the substitution of an occupying proprietary in lieu of the existing system of dual ownership. They said that, subject to certain exceptions, settlements for this purpose should be between owners and occupiers. They said it was desirable in the interests of Ireland that present owners of land should not be, as a result of a settlement, expatriated or find no object in remaining in Ireland. They said to obtain such a result an equitable price ought to be paid to owners on a basis of income, and they defined that basis of income as second-term rents, or their fair equivalent, and they agreed that the capital sum for that income should be obtainable without capital outlay on their part such as would be involved by further charges. As an inducement for owners to continue to reside in Ireland, extended provision, they said, should be made in the Land Bill for the re-sale of mansions, demesne lands, and home farms, and also for the re-sale of land to enlarge neighbouring tenancies. The amount of purchase money payable by the tenant should extend over a series of years at the rate of principal and interest that would at once secure a reduction of not less than 15, and not more than 25 per cent. reduction on second-term rents. They recognised that these proposals might involve some assistance from the State beyond the use of State credit. These resolutions, as I have said, did not constitute a scheme; their importance consisted in the fact that some of them were obviously directly in the interest of landlords, and others obviously in the direct interest of tenants, but they were unanimously agreed to by the representatives of both.

Now I go on to attempt to describe the scheme of the Bill and then to show how far it goes to meet the principles accepted at the Landowners' Convention and at the Land Conference. The purchase of entire estates by the Land Commission for the purpose of re-sale, in recent Acts at all events, has been recognised in theory as the policy of the law, but the policy has hitherto remained entirely inoperative. Sales by owners to tenants have been in almost every case sales of separate holdings, though in some cases they have been made on a very considerable scale. The object of the first twenty-five clauses of the Bill is to make the policy of sales of entire estates an operative policy, and to encourage and facilitate the sale of entire estates by holding out increased advantages to landlords to sell and tenants to buy.

One of the most important provisions in the Bill is the constitution of a new authority, to be called the Estates Commission, for the purpose of exercising functions of the Land Commission, so far as they relate to the sale and purchase of estates. The Commissioners will be an administrative body, they will act under the Irish Government, and the Irish Government will be responsible to Parliament for their action. Their function will be, not to impede, but to facilitate transactions of this character, so far as that can be done consistently with maintaining security for advances made by the State. In these transactions, no existing rights are withdrawn, individual bargains between landlords and tenants may still go on, subject to the present examination by the Land Commission, but the Bill contemplates that, in future, in the majority of these transactions, transactions will take the form of sales of entire estates. The Commissioners will have power to define an estate, and it will not necessarily be the whole of the property of a landlord, and may mean an area, which, taken alone or in conjunction with land at present untenanted and which it may be expedient for economic reasons to add to the tenanted part of an estate, can be dealt with as a whole. These transactions will remain voluntary and may be carried out in either of two ways. The landlord may make his own bargain or arrangements with his tenants, and if the arrangements fall within the policy of the Bill, they will only have to go before the Estates Commission to be sanctioned. On the other hand, the landlord may approach the Commissioners and may apply to them to purchase with a view to re-sale, but whichever method is adopted the purchase either in respect of holdings or of untenanted land must come within the limits laid down in the Bill. In either of these cases it will be the ordinary, but not a universal condition that some reduction should take place in the amount of instalments payable to the Government as compared with the existing rent—the judicial rent. That condition, which is necessary in all ordinary cases, is in the interest both of the State and of the tenants. It is necessary in the interest of the State because it is essential that the State should have a fair margin of security. It is necessary in the interest of the tenant, because in entering into a transaction extending over a long period of years it is essential that from the outset the transaction should be safe and secure. It is necessary, also, because experience has, I believe, proved that in the case of the 80,000 sales which have already taken place there has invariably been a reduction in the instalments as compared with the rent. It would be impossible for the State to enter into a bargain with a very much larger number of tenants and to place them in a worse position than the purchasers under previous Acts.

I will try to explain how the provisions of the Bill will affect both tenants and landlords. I have quoted some of the most important resolutions of the conference. We have not been able to go the whole length of those resolutions. In our opinion that would involve excessive and also indeterminate charges upon the Exchequer. The conference proposed that the normal reduction of instalments, as compared with rent, should range from 15 to 25 per cent. We have endeavoured to meet that proposal by a system of zones. We have adopted the mean reduction suggested by the conference—that is 20 per cent.—and we have enlarged the limits from 15 to 25 per cent., and from 10 to 30 per cent. The conference used the expression of the fair equivalent of second-term rents. We have endeavoured to translate that recommendation into practice by adopting a different zone for first-term rents, and extending the limits of reduction to reductions of from 20 to 40 per cent. The chief subject of contention in this Bill in the other House of Parliament has been the subject of these zones. The representatives of the tenants endeavoured in the House of Commons to get rid of the maximum limit of reduction, but on this point we were not able to make any concession. The zones will remain as they were introduced in the Bill as the limit within which bargains will be accepted by the Commissioners without question. But we did accept Amendments which, in the first place, excluded non-judicial rents altogether from the zones, and, in the next place, made the adoption of zones optional as between the parties.

Bargains may still be permitted which are not within the limits of the zones; but in their case the transaction must undergo a full examination by the Commissioners. We regret that this concession was found necessary; but we believe that the practical effect of it will not be extensive, and that it will not extend much farther than the special treatment of some inferior holdings. The transactions within the limit of the zone will be so much more frequent and easily effected than those outside the limit, that we believe they will be the rule in all ordinary cases. These Amendments were assented to by the Government, and were also assented to by the representatives of the landlords in the other House of Parliament. I believe that those representatives were wise in accepting these Amendments in order to preserve and to maintain the impression that both classes were still working in concert in order that the measure might pass, and I believe they were right in thinking that such an impression, if it was to pr would do more to facilitate rapid settlement and fair bargains than could be done by the most perfect legislation. I have no doubt this House will hear a good deal further on this point, but I will reserve any further observations for a later period.

I have spoken so far of the conditions chiefly which affect the tenant. Now I come to the point how far that principle of the recommendations was met which laid down that the landlord's income should not be reduced by transactions of this kind by more than 10 per cent., which was the estimated cost of the collection of the rent. This representation cannot be absolutely accurate; a great deal must depend on the character of the estate. It is partly met by a provision in the Bill which substitutes payment in cash for payment in stock. It has been met so far as we have found it possible by a reduction of the rate, at which the annuities payable by the tenant will be calculated. The tenant now pays £4 for every £100 advanced to him. This will be reduced by the Bill to £3 5s. The ten years reductions are abolished, and the period of the annuity will be sixty-eight and a half years. The effect of these changes taken together is that the State will be able to advance a larger sum than at present on a reduced instalment. To these sums is also added the bonus. That also was a suggestion mentioned in the conference. Here again we have been unable to go the length which was suggested. As placed before us, the suggestion was that the State should find a sum of money to bridge over the gap between the landlord's and the tenant's price—between the sum that the landlord could afford to accept and the sum that the tenant could afford to give. If that principle had been adopted in that shape it would, in our opinion, have involved unreasonable demands on one side, or perhaps the rejection of reasonable offers on the other. But we do admit that, this transaction not being one of the landlord's seeking, there is some consideration due from his point of view. We admit that we are not legislating wholly for the present owners, but also for those who are to succeed them, and we consider that it would not be just that the necessary cost of these transactions should be thrown entirely on the present life owners of these estates.

We have, therefore, thought it equitable to provide a sum of £12,000,000, which will be distributed in addition to the purchase money at the rate of a 12 per cent. addition. That may be fairly taken as a provision which would cover, perhaps more than cover, the expenses of the transaction. We have asked Parliament to provide this bonus of £12,000,000, the interest on which will fall upon the annual Estimates. The charge will be a small one at first, but will undoubtedly, as the process goes on, be an increasing one; but we have asked Parliament to consent to take upon itself this charge all the more willingly because we believe that the charge will be partial at first, and will subsequently be compensated for by the economies which Parliament will be able to make both in the expenses of the judicial machinery for settling land disputes and in the cost of the establishments provided for maintaining public order in Ireland. The bonus will go directly to the owners, and it will constitute a substantial increase of price which they may expect to receive for their property from the direct application of the credit of the State.

The actual amount to be received by the landlord, and the future income, consisting of interest on that amount, must, as I have said, depend within certain limits on the terms which he is able to make with his tenants. The advantage to the landlord will vary in different cases. It will depend to a considerable extent on the condition of his property, on the embarrassed or unembarrassed condition of his estate, and also on the manner in which he will be able to invest the capital sum which he will receive. In the case of heavily encumbered estates where it will be possible to pay off encumbrances bearing in some cases a very high rate of interest, the relief will be very great; and the appointment of a public trustee, and the enlargement of the investments which are permitted under the Acts, which is also provided for in this Bill, will enable investments to be made in many cases at a better rate of interest than 3¼ per cent. It is impossible, therefore, to say in every case what will be the future assured income of the landlord who sells, but it is possible to give an example of what he may expect to receive in what I may call normal cases and cases coming within the zones to which I have referred. In the case of a landlord selling £100 on second-term rents, if the landlord and tenant agree on instalments of £85—that is to say, 15 per cent.—this will produce to the vendor £2,615. To that is added a bonus of 12 per cent., which is £314. The total of £2,929 will produce at 3¼ per cent. an income of nearly £95. On the other hand, if landlord and tenant agree on instalments of £75—that is to say, nearly the lower limit, or 25 per cent.—the price will be £2,308, the bonus will be £277, and the income produced by the total of £2,585 will be £84. Those are normal cases, and the advantage I have already pointed out will be very much greater in the case of an encumbered owner, who can pay off his mortgages, or of an owner who is able to invest at a higher rate of interest than 3¼ per cent.

There is another principle which has also been recognised in former Acts, and which has up to the present time been also wholly inoperative. That is the principle which enabled advances to be made for the sale of untenanted land. This Bill empowers and directs the Estates Commissioners to make these provisions operative. The owner who sells that portion of his estate which is occupied may find himself left with a certain amount of unoccupied land. It may be grass land, let on what are called eleven months tenancies, which have not come within the scope of the Acts. The owner cannot sell land of this description unless he can find a purchaser who can advance the cash, and the tenant cannot buy the additional land which may be necessary for the improvement of his holding unless he is in a position to find cash for that purpose. Advances for the sale of such land and for re-sale to certain classes of tenants and others are provided for under the second clause of the Bill. I think the advantages of this power to the landlord must be obvious, and the advantages to the tenant are not less great.

There are estimated to be in Ireland 490,000 agricultural holdings, and of these there are 278,000 which are under £10 valuation, and 134,000 which are under £4 valuation. I do not say that the whole of these small tenancies are uneconomic holdings. It may be that where the tenant can obtain employment as a labourer a very small holding of this description may add to his comfort and that of his family very materially. But in cases where the estate consists almost entirely of such holdings, where there is no field for other occupation, it is almost impossible to conceive that holdings of this character can be such as to provide decent subsistence for a man and his family. There may also be in the neighbourhood of estates sold under the Act congested districts, for the inhabitants of which holdings ought to be found. This provision then, I think, is one of the greatest importance, as it enables existing holdings to a great extent to be improved by the advance of the purchase money for an addition to them, and it also provides for the re-settlement of some people in the congested districts.

There is another provision to which I believe the conference attach considerable importance. That is a provision relating to the advance to owners in respect of their demesne lands, including the mansion house. Such advances may be made under this Bill provided that they do not exceed the limit of either £20,000 or one-third of the value of the whole estate, whichever sum may be the smaller. These advances will increase the capital sum which may be received by the owner for his whole estate, and they will enable him to retain his demesne lands and his house upon the payment of a moderate annuity. The provision will be of especial value to the owners of small and encumbered estates, inasmuch as they will be able to substitute for mortgages carrying very heavy charges an annuity of a very moderate character. At the same time they will be able to retain the house in which they have resided, and so much of their property as they may desire to keep in their own hands.

I have said nothing, and I do not think it is necessary that I should say anything, in regard to the financial proposals of the Bill. I conceive that it would not be within the power of this House to alter the chief financial provisions, and in those circumstances I conceive that your Lordships will not desire to discuss them. Those provisions have been accepted, not without question, but with the support of a very large body of opinion in the other House, and unless this debate should show that there is any anxiety to enter upon that particular question, I do not think it necessary for me to waste your Lordships' time by saying anything on the subject. I have thus attempted to explain only one or two or three of the main provisions of the Bill. There are a vast number of subsidiary provisions into which it is quite impossible for me to attempt to enter. I said at the outset that it was impossible for me to relate the full history of the Irish land question. It is equally impossible for me to give full details of the suggested settlement. But if there were time, and if I were competent to undertake the task, I do not think it would be necessary for me to do so for my present purpose. It would be, I think, only affectation on my part if I were to suggest to your Lordships' House that this measure comes before it for consideration *de novo*. There are many occasions on which your Lordships are invited to initiate legislation, and I believe legislation in relation to this very subject has been initiated in this House; but in the present case the functions of this House are essentially those of a second Chamber. It is in your Lordships' power either to confirm or to reject this Bill. It is open to you, within certain limits, to amend it or to suggest amendment; but it is not open to you, without running serious risk of the loss of the measure substantially to alter its main provisions.

My Lords, very ample preparation has been made for the introduction of the measure. Preparation has been made for it by the Bill of last year, and by the discussion to which that Bill gave rise. Preparation has been made for it, as I have reminded your Lordships by the conference which took place last autumn, a conference in which the leading part was taken by men who were qualified to speak, not, indeed, in the name of the whole of the classes whom they represented, but of very large numbers of them, and men who were in a position to recommend with authority the conclusions to which they came and the proposals which they made. The measure which followed upon these preparations has met with an unusual amount of acceptance in the other House. It has been accepted by those who must be held to represent, if not the universal Irish opinion, at least —if there is any virtue at all in representative institutions—the opinion of the vast majority of the occupiers of the land. It has been accepted by the scanty number of representatives of the Irish landlords who are to be found in the other House. More important than all, it has been accepted by the great majority of the representatives of England and Scotland, by the assistance of whose credit and whose cash this measure can alone be carried into effect.

These, my Lords, are the credentials with which this measure comes before you. Here, fortunately, it will find a fair and adequate representation of the other party whose loyal, if not enthusiastic, acceptance of this measure is as necessary to its success as that of the tenants' party. This measure is presented as a treaty or instrument of peace, to the working of which the consent of one party is as necessary as the other; and if, as I expect, the landlords' representatives are prepared to accept this measure in the same spirit as that in which it has been met in the other House, I cannot doubt that the great majority of the English and Scottish Peers who compose the larger proportion of this House will, not by a Party vote, but by a unanimous vote, accept the principle of the Bill. But your Lordships must remember that the Bill is, as I have said, in the nature of a treaty or instrument of peace. It has been arrived at by negotiation. Its main principles are indissolubly connected, and while your Lordships will have a perfect right to reject it, if you think it unwise or unstatesmanlike, any serious alteration of its main provisions would release the contracting parties to this treaty from the obligations which they have mutually undertaken.

After the failure of so many previous attempts, it would be rash to prophesy that this Bill will offer a final settlement of the Irish land question. But I think we are justified in entertaining a strong hope and a firm trust that it will go far to do so. In our opinion this Bill violates no economic principle. That can hardly be said of all its predecessors. The attempt to settle the fixing of the rent of land by legal procedure in a country where competition for the occupation of land is so keen as it is in Ireland—although, as I have admitted, it may have been necessary in order to stave off still greater evils—was never a hopeful enterprise. Now it is abundantly proved that it cannot be the basis of a final settlement. But I do not know of any economic objection to the employment of the credit of the State in an attempt to relieve the two classes mainly interested in the soil of Ireland from an unsound and an intolerable position. This experiment has already been tried on a limited scale and has met with such success as might be anticipated on that limited scale and under the restrictions to which it was exposed. It will now be tried on a larger scale, and under conditions more liberal both to the owners and to the occupiers. Above all, this experiment is now going to be tried at a time when a new spirit of reason and conciliation appears to prevail in Ireland. Formerly attempts have been made to impose the will of Parliament upon conflicting and contending interests. These attempts have generally been strenuously, and even bitterly, opposed by the representatives of one or other of those interests; sometimes they have been opposed by both. Never before, I believe, have the representatives of those interests approached you with a joint petition that you should give your sanction to a settlement the main principles and provisions of which they have themselves suggested. Therefore I say that this measure comes before us fraught with better hopes for the future of Ireland, for the peace and prosperity of Ireland, than on any previous occasion we have dared to entertain. I move that this Bill be now read a second time.

Moved, that the Bill be now read, 2a.—(*The Duke of Devonshire*).

THE DUKE OF ABERCORN: My Lords, I should like to say a few words on this Bill, not in any contentious spirit, but in support of it. I rise with feelings of grief mixed with pride—grief in thinking of the extinction that is about to take place under this Bill of what is called the landlord class in Ireland, and the consequent separation that has for so many generations existed between the landowners and their tenantry, and of pride in being connected with that class that has suffered so much and so patiently under the land laws of Ireland. I think it only right that I should publicly recognise the great liberality of the financial provisions of this Bill, the cordiality with which they were received and voted by all political Parties in the House of Commons, and the many expressions of friendly feeling and goodwill towards Ireland, which they have called forth not only in the other branch of the legislature, but at many public meetings and in almost every important organ of public opinion throughout Great Britain.

My Lords, I believe I may safely undertake to speak not only for the Irish landlords, but also for the Irish tenants, and for all classes of people in Ireland, in saying that Ireland greatly appreciates and heartily reciprocates these proofs of a friendly interest in her welfare from the people of Great Britain. Whether this Bill proves to be a success or a failure as a measure of land purchase, the good effects of these internal expressions and feelings of friendship will endure, and will bear good fruit in many directions in the future. The prospects of the Bill as a measure of land purchase seem to me to depend partly upon the methods and spirit in which it may be administered, and partly upon its being recognised by the Irish tenantry that even the highest prices sanctioned by the Bill would give them better terms than they can expect from a continuance of the rent-fixing system, and that, on the other hand, the great majority of landlords will be unable to sell, unless they receive prices which when invested in trustees' securities will produce at least 90 per cent. of what is called a second-term rental.

I make no complaint of tenants endeavouring to make the best possible bargains for themselves in every case, but I would remind them and their advisers in every part of the country that up to the present the tenants have received all the benefits, and the landlords have had to bear the evils of the legislation of the last twenty years. Owing to this fact the incomes of the landlords have been so much reduced that the great majority of them will be found neither willing nor able to enter into bargains which would result in any further material reduction of the incomes which they now derive from their estates. The Bill now before your Lordships is one of the most important and far-reaching that has ever been introduced into Parliament for dealing with the land question in Ireland, and for effecting a final settlement, equitable as far as possible, and satisfactory between landlord and tenant. In fact, it tends to perform a social revolution. The feeling in Ireland with regard to purchase has been slowly but gradually increasing, and the country, through its representatives in the House of Commons, has declared in an unmistakable manner that it is prepared for a great measure of land purchase.

I wish it to be clearly understood that it was not of the landlords' seeking, but circumstances over which they had no control, and unfortunate legislation in years past, which has brought them to their present position. To part with an estate that has been in your family for generations, to sever your connection with your tenants with whom you have lived on the best of terms, is an unpleasant wrench. Money, even in these days, is not a compensation for everything. Money cannot obliterate the old associations connected with family ties, and, I might almost say, with historic connections. To part with the familiar acres, and to receive in lieu thereof money, the investment of which is always attended with anxiety and is never free from risk, is not a very agreeable exchange. A great many people in this country seem to believe that the Irish landlord is receiving money compensation for the injuries inflicted on him in the past, or, in other words, that the bonus under the Bill will be paid to him on account of these injuries. Nothing could be farther from the truth. No class has been so shamefully treated by legislation as the Irish landlords, and I believe that in no other civilised country but England would such treatment have been tolerated, and this treatment meted out to the most loyal men, and, taking them as a class, the very backbone of their country.

My Lords, just contemplate the situation. In the past you allowed the Irish landlords to believe that they were the owners of the soil, subject to terminable tenancies. You allowed estates to be bought and sold on this basis. Worse than that, you warranted the title to purchasers under the Landed Estates Court Act. On the faith of this Parliamentary title, the purchasers advanced their money. Then, by the Act of 1881, at one blow you transfer half of the property so guaranteed from the landlord to the tenant. I am not considering the matter from the tenant's point of view. I am merely showing how the State has treated the landlord. The case for the tenant has been ably put forward and treated in the other House by gentlemen far more eloquent than myself, but no one speaks up for the Irish landlord in this country, with very few exceptions. But, as a landlord myself, and as such deeply interested in the welfare of that country and in the affections of its people, I am endeavouring to demonstrate how the State has treated the class to which I belong, and to state that nothing in the shape of money can compensate many of them, and mainly the solvent ones, for the losses they have already sustained, and which they will further feel under the provisions of this Bill.

Do not imagine that you are heaping gold upon the landlord. Having deprived him of so much, you are mainly by your credit enabling him to use what remains with respect to money. I hope, my Lords, that it will not be inferred from what I have said that I do not join heartily in the almost universal praise which is due to the Chief Secretary for his great achievement in connection with this Bill. The ability, energy, and tact with which he initiated the measure and carried it through the other House is a proof that he possesses the mind of a great and enthusiastic statesman. That the landlord under this Bill will receive the equivalent of his reduced income is a matter upon which I have grave doubts. A great deal will depend upon the Estate Commissioners. Their behaviour will be anxiously watched from the beginning. If the owners of solvent estates see that the work is cheaply and expeditiously done and the purchase money made available they will sell. If they see the process will be slow and expensive they will not sell. That vast quantities of land will be sold I have no doubt, but the distribution of the purchase money is the difficulty, and I cannot think that this difficulty is sufficiently grappled with in the Bill; therefore, it will not be surprising if the owners of solvent estates hang back for some time to see how other estates are dealt with.

There is one thing always present in my mind, and that is how are we to keep in Ireland those who have sold out. The material loss of all the money taken out will be immense, but even that would not be the worst part of the evil. I believe that the disappearance of the country gentry from the various localities in which they hitherto have lived will be an irreparable loss to Ireland. Their example has been beneficial, and their subscriptions have helped to support many institutions and charities. All these must cease, but the one thing to help to keep the Irish gentry as residents is the possession of their sporting rights. Every effort should be made in the House to maintain these, and to make their rights secure, otherwise, if these are thrown away, and the landlords have in addition lost their property, what inducement have they to remain in their country; My Lords, I give my hearty support to this Bill, but we shall move various Amendments, not in any contentious spirit, but simply to make the working of it, according to our views, more satisfactory and efficient, and thereby to carry out its intention in passing the possession of the land from one class to another.

THE EARL OF CREWE: My Lords, it cannot, I think, be disputed that in one respect, as the noble Lord has told us, this Bill presents an almost unique spectacle in the fact that it is an Irish measure of the first class, which has come here from another place, with the practical assent of the whole of the other House and with the enthusiastic support of a large majority of it. Most Irish measures of the first class within the memory of all of us have come up from the other House after a fierce struggle there, pursued, so to speak, by a shower of brickbats, and have in this House, unfortunately, been the subject of some measure of the passion which they raised in the other. But in this case this Bill comes before us with a shower of congratulations, in which I cordially join, so far as they concern the manner in which the Chief Secretary for Ireland conducted his Bill. Nothing could exceed the tact, the ability, and the patience with which Mr. Wyndham did his task. It is perfectly true that his ship had behind it a fairer wind than has generally fallen to the lot of Ministers in charge of Irish Bills, but that does not alter the fact that he showed the greatest possible skill and discretion in steering clear of the rocks and shoals which beset his course.

It is a refreshing instance of our contempt for logical politics that this measure, which has gained such a universal meed of approbation, is a measure among all others which it would be very difficult, I think, to defend on strictly logical principles. The Bill after all is in some respects a gigantic paradox. Here you have in Ireland one class of persons, the landlords, with something which they are not unwilling to sell, and another class, the tenants, who are decidedly anxious to buy that thing. Those two parties cannot come to terms, by the nature of the case. It is always difficult to strike a bargain between a landlord and a tenant, in any country, for the sale of an agricultural estate, for this reason: that the tenant, fearing the future, will not bind himself to pay an amount either by way of rent or annuity equivalent to the rent he is now paying, even though that rent be fair, whereas the landlord does not see why he, receiving a certain rent, should take less, because he hopes for the best and trusts that he may be able to maintain that rent. Consequently, in these circumstances, a third party, the Exchequer, with no direct interest in the matter, is called in to make up the amount between what the landlord is willing to take and what the tenant is willing to give. And then there are minor paradoxes in the Bill. When you come to think of it, it is a remarkable thing to buy a man's house and park from him and sell it back to him on easier terms, lending him the money to pay for it; and, later on in the Bill, you will find another strange paradox, that a great educational corporation, Trinity College, because it fears it may lose in the course of the transaction between those to whom it has let this land and those to whom the land has been sublet, is to receive £5,000 a year of Irish money. I do not say that all those things cannot be defended, although I think the last does require some very definite defence; but at the same time it cannot be denied that these are unusual features to see presented in a Bill to your Lordships' House.

This may be said to be done to some extent for the sake of peace. Peace, as we all know, is one of the most persistent and successful blackmailers that exist. Whenever we are called upon to expend some large additional sum on armaments of any kind we are always told that it is done in the sacred name of peace. I quite admit, however, that it is worth while to enter upon this singular transaction if it will, as I trust it may, secure a further measure of peace in Ireland. But I think there is another ground on which a defence of this transaction may fairly be based, namely, that we in Great Britain are definitely responsible for the Irish land system. It was we, after all, who first put the Irish landlords there; it was we who allowed the Irish land system to fall into the confusion into which it was before 1870; and it was we who have been responsible for legislation since that year, and consequently it is upon those grounds that, if I had to defend the Bill, I should be disposed to base the greater part of my defence.

I have no desire to trace back the whole course, or anything like it, of land purchase legislation. So long ago as 1868 Mr. John Stuart Mill proposed a scheme for compulsory expropriation of Irish landlords. What he considered to be fair compensation in that scheme was combated in a very interesting pamphlet by the late Lord Dufferin, mainly on two grounds—one that it was hard upon Irish landlords to remove them from their estates on any terms; and the other, that it was a dangerous thing to place the British Exchequer in direct contact with the Irish tenant. On that last point I will say a word later. I need not go through the various Purchase Acts, but I should like to say one word about the Act of 1881, although it was not a Purchase Act. That Act, in the general atmosphere of benevolence which reigned in another place during the discussion on this Bill, received less unkindly notice from the Prime Minister than I have ever known it to receive from any member of the present Government, and I think I am right in saying that later on his view was to some considerable extent endorsed by the Chief Secretary. But, after all, this measure is in some distinct degree the child of the Land Act of 1881, because if it had not been for the system of rent-fixing then introduced, it is not easy to see how the system of purchase organised under this Bill could have been brought into play. Any scheme for purchasing the whole of the land of Ireland by a system of valuation of each farm, or as the result of a particular bargain with no standard to go upon, would in my opinion have been an impossible business; and, therefore, it is only fair to say that, however much you may dislike the system of rent fixing, to a very great degree it has unquestionably facilitated the Purchase Acts that have been subsequently passed, and will also facilitate this Bill when it passes into law.

Nor, my Lords, do I wish to spend any time in discussing Mr. Gladstone's Land Purchase Bill of 1886. That measure, of course, was vitiated in the eyes of noble Lords opposite, and others of their Party, by the fact that it formed part of Mr. Gladstone's Home Rule scheme, but I, at any rate, am loyal enough to the past to say that I believe that if that Purchase Bill could have become law it would in the great majority of cases have placed Irish landlords in as good a position as they are likely to be placed in under this Bill, and that it might have prevented a great many of the misfortunes which have happened in Ireland between 1886 and now. To come to the present Bill, the one point of serious interest, as it seems to me, to which one can allude on the Second Reading is this:—Will the landlords as a rule sell? because if they do not as a rule sell, I am afraid that a serious state of things may follow. The state of things which will follow will, of course, be that state of things which to some extent is existing now, and which was foretold at the time of the passing of the Land Act of 1891—namely, that you have two sets of tenants, one the purchasing tenant and the other the tenant who has not purchased, farming identical land, and paying a rent on an entirely different scale for that land; and if this new system of purchase under this Act is only partially adopted, that difficulty will be vastly increased.

I think it cannot be denied that every landlord who does not sell, supposing his tenants desire him to sell, under this Act, will cause his estate to become a centre of present discontent and the focus of possible disturbance in the future. I hope, therefore, that noble Lords in this House and every influential landlord in Ireland will use the utmost pressure they can upon their friends in Ireland to induce them to take advantage of the provisions of this Act, and not to allow the possibility of a new land agitation arising owing to the fact that some landlords are unwilling to sell. One knows that there are cantankerous and unreasonable people in every class, and I confess I look forward with some dismay to the possibility of what may happen if some unreasonable landlord is unwilling to sell to his tenants on grounds which to them and to the public at large seem entirely insufficient.

Now, will the landlords sell on a large scale? It appears to me that there are four reasons which in Great Britain cause the possession of a large agricultural estate to be agreeable and advantageous, and only the first of those reasons applies strongly to Ireland. The first reason is the one which was mentioned by the noble Duke who spoke last, and whom I heard with great sympathy on that point—the unwillingness of a man who is in possession of an ancestral estate which has come down to him through many generations to sever his connection with it. I quite agree that it must be a severe wrench, as the noble Duke said, for many a man in that position. One does not like to think of historical Irish names like that of the noble Duke opposite, like that of O'Brien, Fitzgerald, Butler, and Beresford altogether severed from the possession of Irish land; but those owners, and others like them, must be content to consider that in selling their estates they are carrying out their part of a great national policy. It so happens that a great many Irish landlords are great British landlords also. Of those who own the first dozen largest valuations in Ireland more than half have an interest in land in England or Scotland, which is always considerable, and in some cases greater than their Irish interests; and therefore in severing their connection with Irish land they will not be severing their connection with land altogether.

Then I come to the second advantage of the possession of an agricultural estate in England and Scotland, namely, the pleasure which is derived from its management and administration. We know that that pleasure has practically departed from the Irish landlord. Even before 1870 it was not the custom in Ireland to take so direct a part in the management of and expenditure on Irish estates as is taken in the case of British estates, and since 1881 it may be said to have ceased altogether. Therefore, that tie to the land may be in the main struck off in the case of Irish landlords. Then the third advantage to the British landlord is the fact that the possession of a large estate still gives a certain degree of political influence. I am afraid it must be said that in Ireland that attraction has also ceased. I should hope that one of the results of the passing of this measure will be that, whereas at this moment it is not an easy matter for an Irish landlord to be elected on any Irish County Council, after it has passed he will be welcomed on the Council as one of the principal men in his district. But so far as political influence from the possession of land is concerned, that I think must also be struck off. The fourth attraction of owning a large agricultural estate is the sport to be derived from it. The one sport of all others which depends most of all upon the possession of a large agricultural acreage—I mean that of partridge shooting—is not a distinctively Irish sport; and so far as other kind of sports are concerned I sincerely trust that landlords will be able to maintain them as they have them now, under the provisions of this Bill.

The noble Duke who spoke last told us that he, as representing the landlords in this House, was prepared to present certain Amendments to this Bill. I join with the noble Duke, the Leader of the House, in hoping that these Amendments may not be of so controversial a character as in any way to imperil the passage of the Bill. Of course, I am not in any way able to foresee what form those Amendments may take, but I sincerely hope the noble Duke and his friends will not attempt to interfere with the arrangement which was reached in the other House with respect to the minimum price. It is not necessary, after the clear statement of the noble Duke, to go in any way into the question of the zones. It is perfectly clear that the retention of a maximum price is an advantageous thing from the point of view of the British taxpayer, but if a rigid minimum price was fixed it seems absolutely evident that in some cases it would interfere with the transactions taking place at all. When one considers the enormous difference in the number of years purchase at which land has been sold in Ireland—it has been sold as high as forty-five years purchase—and I remember a case of a small estate being sold on an average of nine years purchase with a minimum of six years—it certainly does seem that the adoption of anything like a fixed minimum price must interfere with certain transactions taking place at all, with the possible result of raising that ill-feeling which I mentioned just now. I am aware, of course, that the argument for limitation is the supposed possibility that some impecunious and unscrupulous landlord may fix a rather ruinous price with his tenant, collar the bonus and retire from the scene with a small amount of ready money, but I should hope that the provisions which have been placed in the Bill under the compromise will prevent the possibility of any occurrence of that kind.

With regard to sporting rights, I should not be surprised if some of the Amendments of the noble Duke opposite were directed to that point. I do not know whether he will try to secure sporting rights being left by the Bill more definitely the property of the landlord than they are in the measure as presented to us, but I should like to remind him of this, that after all the agreement which is suggested in the Bill as being the proper method of arriving at the possession of sporting rights is an absolutely necessary factor in that question. No amount of donation of sporting rights to a landlord by any Act of Parliament will give him any real enjoyment of those rights unless the people who occupy the land are willing to join in and agree with the arrangement, and consequently, although the wording of the Bill may seem to some extent to take away from landlords without compensation what they have at present, I cannot believe that that will be in any degree the result of the passing of the Bill as it stands. I must also remind the noble Duke that the words inserted in the other House were the result of a compromise after a long debate, and that they had the peculiar distinction of being suggested by the Solicitor-General for England, forming, I believe, almost his sole contribution to the discussion during the whole time the Bill was in another place.

I confess that there are one or two points on which I should have liked to have seen the Bill amended. I should have liked, and I believe it would have met the wishes of both parties in Ireland, to have seen a time limit fixed for the application of the bonus. I think it certainly would have placed the matter in a more satisfactory position if landlords had been obliged, in order to get the bonus, to lodge a notice of their intention to sell within, say, 5 or 6 years. I am aware, of course, of the objection that is taken to this course, and which proved fatal to it in another place, namely, the risk of the disturbance of the money market by a great rush of applications made at the same time. I do not profess to be any authority on that point, and if that objection is so strong I admit that it must be a fatal objection. I cannot help, however, shedding a tear in passing over that time limit, because I think it would have been a distinctly advantageous addition to the Bill.

I confess also that I should have been glad to see the Congested Districts Board furnished with some stronger powers than those which they possess in the Bill. No one can appreciate more thoroughly than I do the admirable work of the Congested Districts Board. It is the fashion, and I think not without some ground, to say hard things of the system of boards existing in Irish government, as compared with the single man system which we favour in this country, but if I ever join in that condemnation of boards I should especially except the Congested Districts Board, because it has been admirably composed and the work it has done has been of the highest possible value. At the same time it cannot be denied that its particular operations in assisting migration and purchase of estates have been tardy. I do not say it is the fault of the Board, but disappointment has been caused by the slowness and the small number of operations that have taken place in this direction. I should hope that under the Bill the pace will be considerably quickened, but still if some powers of stronger pressure could have been placed on the Congested Districts Board to enable them to acquire, rather more quickly, land suitable for their purpose, I should heartily have welcomed it.

I desire to say one word now from an entirely different standpoint—that of the British taxpayer. I am inclined to agree with what the Chief Secretary said, that, so far as the cash payment is concerned, it does not very much matter whether we pay cash or pledge our credit. In the existing prosperity of this country, so far as our safety and comfort is concerned, I do not know that there is very much difference between the two things; but I am obliged to say a word with regard to the fact that this Bill will place the British taxpayer in direct contact with the Irish tenant, a proceeding to which Lord Dufferin, thirty-five years ago, took such strong exception. What is the security which the British Exchequer has in the case of these sales? In the first place, it has the security of the land itself, but that is the last security of which it would wish to make use, and it cannot be considered, for the purposes of the British taxpayer, as an effective security. Then it has the security of being able to withdraw the Exchequer grants now made to Ireland, but that does not seem a very practical security. By withdrawing those grants you would unquestionably create a revolution in Ireland, if you had not one there as your reason for withdrawing the grants. It is perfectly clear that to withdraw these grants would absolutely dislocate the whole system of local government in Ireland. Then it is said the Exchequer has the security of the difference between what would be the rack rent of the land and the annuity paid by the purchasing tenant. That, of course, is only a moral security. Once the tenant is gone, owing to his not paying his annuity, that security is worth nothing, for this reason, that by the nature of the case the incoming tenant would certainly be unwilling to pay anything more than the annuity, supposing, which is doubtful, you could get an incoming tenant at all.

But, as a matter of fact, I am not disposed to quarrel with the security. I believe the moral security is an exceedingly good one, and that is the real security which the Government is taking under this Bill. I am bound to point out, however, that in taking that security noble Lords opposite, and the Party to which they belong, seem to be taking a very different view of the Irish tenant from that which they have taken of him in past years. In past years the Irish tenant was apt to be described as a man whose grievance was founded partly upon a simple desire to get more money into his own pocket, and partly upon the statements of designing agitators. He was partly a knave and partly a dupe. If I believed one tithe of the things we have heard in this House, and out of it, of Irish farmers as a class, I should be very much disposed to vote against the Second Reading of this Bill; but a great deal of what was said then was said in the heat of controversy, and I hope we may be able to draw the sponge over the whole of that slate.

But the fact that you are willing to give this security has a certain bearing on another question. It was asked in the debates in another place, and it has been asked at different times in the country—What is the bearing of this great land change upon the political question of the government of Ireland? Will the concession of this measure increase the Nationalist demand in Ireland, or will it diminish it? I have no desire to argue that point. There is something, no doubt, to be said on both sides. After all, the strongest and most active Nationalist agitation has always come in Ireland, not from the country, but from the towns, and I am disposed to doubt whether any settlement of the agrarian question will seriously affect that demand. From one point of view I do not know that it very much matters whether it does or not. If it does affect that demand nobody, at any rate on this side of the House, would desire to force anything in the nature of further self-government on unwilling Irishmen. If the demand is not checked by this legislation, then that demand will have to be met in some form or other. But my point is this, that in giving this intense proof of confidence in the Irish tenant you are showing more faith in his honesty, in his self-restraint, and in his good sense than if you were to confer upon him some sort of subordinate legislature to sit in Dublin. That is a fact which seems to me to be beyond dispute, and while thoroughly endorsing, as I do, the action of His Majesty's Government in conferring this proof of confidence upon the Irish farmer, I do not wish to disguise from myself what its nature is.

I cannot help feeling that the progress of the settlement under this measure may be to some extent endangered by the fiscal proposals of the Secretary of State for the Colonies. I cannot think that the right hon. Gentleman, the Chief Secretary for Ireland, can altogether regard with a benediction the sudden action of his colleague in this matter. I am not going to argue any point of Mr. Chamberlain's proposals. As those proposals stand they come to this, that a certain preference is to be placed on articles of food coming from the colonies as against those coming from other parts of the world. What the amount of that preference may be we are not yet permitted to know, but it seems to be very difficult to escape from the proposition that if that preference is to be in any way effective it must have an effect on the price of produce in this country. That being so, the uncertainty existing as to the amount of that preference on food, and, even when we know the amount, as to whether that amount will some day be increased or decreased, is likely to retard the action to be taken under this Bill. There is no doubt that a very moderate preference on meat would be a distinct benefit to the Irish farmer. Noble Lords opposite cheer, but will noble Lords be so very ready, while the amount of that preference remains uncertain, to enter into negotiation for the sale of their land? because it certainly seems to me that it might so happen that if some years hence the price of meat was artificially raised by some proposal such as that favoured by the Colonial Secretary, noble Lords and other landlords in Ireland who had started off at once to sell might find that they had made an exceedingly bad bargain. I am very much afraid that the consciousness of that possibility in the minds of landlords and tenants may have some very appreciable effect in retarding operations under this Bill.

In conclusion I hope that this great measure will pass very much in the form in which it is presented to your Lordships. The moment for its passage is exceedingly propitious. Nobody, I think, can have listened to or read the debates in another place without seeing the extreme desire for a settlement which exists on both sides of the House. That desire was first exemplified in the conference to which the noble Duke, the Leader of the House, referred, and I certainly desire to join in the congratulations to my noble friend, Lord Dunraven, for the part he took in presiding over that conference. The real value of the conference was by no means only in the positive propositions which it made, but in the fact that it showed the people of this country for the first time that both sides really meant business. That feeling of sympathy is one good sign. We have had another very happy sign in the auspicious visit of their Majesties to Ireland, where they received a greeting which must have surpassed almost the highest hopes of those, and their number includes everybody in this country, who took a deep interest in their Majesties' visit. This measure will, I believe, go some way to realise the hopes of those, and I should wish to be numbered among them, who regard

Ireland and its people with special interest and affection; and I believe that beyond that it will, by pacifying that country, realise the hopes of those of your Lordships and of those all over the Empire who have no internal knowledge or special interest in that country, but who have regarded the distress and disaffection of Ireland as the one dark shadow which has been drawn across our splendid Imperial system.

THE EARL OF DUNRAVEN: My Lords, though I have some criticisms to make upon the Bill before your Lordships I wish at once to congratulate His Majesty's Government, and especially the Minister more immediately responsible for the Bill, upon having brought up to your Lordships' House a measure of so large and statesmanlike a character. The Bill, even if in some respects not as satisfactory as I and some others might desire, is, we must admit, couched in a broad and statesmanlike spirit, and is a determined effort to solve a problem which is absolutely vital to Ireland, and which, being vital to Ireland, is, I think, of no insignificant importance to the United Kingdom and to the Empire. It is greatly to be regretted that efforts have been made in various quarters to mis-state and to entirely undervalue the importance of this Bill. It has been described as a kind of Landlords' Relief Bill, and a sort of co-operative brigandage on the part of Irishmen of all classes directed against the Treasury.

The Bill is nothing of the kind. It is a very large measure dealing with a very vast subject. The development of feudalism which took root and grew up naturally in great Britain. and which has proved satisfactory in this country, has never been deemed satisfactory in Ireland. Ireland has never been tranquil under it. For centuries and centuries she has protested against it more or less vigorously, and in my opinion one of the chief merits of this measure is that it recognises that a system which has worked perfectly well and is suitable to the physical characteristics of the people of Great Britain is unsuitable to the physical characteristics and to the genius and nature of the people of Ireland. This Bill does away with the last remnant of that system, and it does away also with the present utterly absurd system of land tenure in Ireland, a system which is disastrous not only to both classes engaged in agriculture—the main industry—but is also demoralising to the whole country.

Under the present system it is impossible, of course, for any landowner to lay out any capital on the land, because it is out of the question that he can ever get any value for it or any interest upon it. It is practically compulsory upon the tenant to produce his farm at the expiration of every statutory term in the most dilapidated condition in which it is possible to produce it. What is the inevitable result? To check nearly all enterprise and nearly all industry. It is demoralising to the tenant farmers because it forces upon them a system of deception; it is ruinous to the landlords, and it is of no benefit whatever to any class or individual in the country. Whether the Act of 1881 and the subsequent Acts are to be considered as satisfying a necessary transitory condition of things, or whether we are to look upon them as utterly and entirely bad, is a question I will not argue, because I do not suppose that any Member of this House, or scarcely any person outside a lunatic asylum, would deny the proposition that the present system is unutterably bad in Ireland.

The Bill aims at abolishing a system which Ireland has protested against for centuries and centuries, and it aims at abolishing the present system which everybody admits to be entirely bad. Of course, in such a large operation as the transfer of practically the whole of the agricultural soil of Ireland from one class to another, accomplishing a great, peaceable and beneficial social revolution, the financial requirements must be very large. My noble friend Lord Crewe has alluded to the effect on the British taxpayer. I do not quite know why the "British" taxpayer specially, because Irishmen pay taxes and are just as much involved in this matter, so far as their numbers and taxable capacity go, as the inhabitants of England, Scotland and Wales. I think your Lordships need be under no misapprehension whatever as to the security which the taxpayers of the United Kingdom have for this great loan of £112,000,000. After all, the best way in which you can possibly judge of the value of their security is by the fact that large sums of money have already been lent on security of precisely similar character.

You must remember that something like, I think, 80,000 tenants have purchased, that there has not only been not the slightest indication of any desire of repudiation, but that the deficit from what I may call purely natural causes has been practically *nil*. I do not believe for a moment that the Irish tenant farmer will ever evince any desire to repudiate, but even suppose for the sake of argument that he is not influenced by a sense of his moral obligations, you have 80,000 men, the great majority of whom have paid off a large proportion of their debt, and many of them are approaching the period when they will become the owners of their farms. It is impossible to conceive that those men would countenance anything like a general repudiation, and precisely the same state of things will grow up under this new loan.

However well the Act may work, a considerable time must elapse before the whole transfer can be accomplished, and in the meantime the men who buy early will every year be coming nearer and nearer to the redemption of their debt, and every year their property will be becoming more and more valuable; and even if you do not consider that the Irish tenant farmer has any particular moral sense about him, repudiation is, I think, out of the question. They dare not do it. The risk of losing valuable property would be too great. The main question, I think, before us to-night is: Will the Bill as it stands effect those great objects which it is intended to carry out? I need not point out to the House that the Bill will be a dead failure unless the large majority of both classes interested are satisfied. If it is not worth while for the tenant to buy, the Bill will be a failure, however willing the landlords may be to sell; and if, on the other hand, the landlords will not sell, the fact that the tenants are ready to buy will be of no avail whatever.

The noble Duke who introduced the Bill made some allusion to the report of the Land Conference, and he said, what was perfectly true, that that conference made no attempt to formulate a definite scheme. I think they were very wise not to do so. It was not one of their functions to draw out an absolutely definite scheme, and to do so they would have been obliged to take upon themselves the somewhat presumptuous duty of dictating to the Treasury the exact terms and amount of the loan, and so on. They contented themselves, therefore, with laying down general propositions, and, as has been pointed out, the great value of that conference was that it showed that men who knew something about the business they were attending to, who knew something about the requirements and necessities of the classes they represented, came to unanimous conclusions as to the main principles which they thought were necessary for successfully instituting a system of peasant proprietary.

The Report of the Land Conference said—and this indicates the general idea that the conference had as to what was necessary for both occupiers and tenants—that for the future welfare of Ireland, and for the smooth working of any measure dealing with the transfer of land, it was necessary, first, that the occupiers should be started on their new career as owners on a fair and favourable basis ensuring reasonable chances of success; that in view of the responsibilities to be assumed by them, they should receive some inducement to purchase; that owners should receive some recognition of the fact that selling may involve a sacrifice of sentiment, and also of the fact that they have already suffered heavily by the operations of the Land Acts, and should be encouraged to sell; and that for the benefit of the whole community it was of the greatest importance that the income derived from the sale of property in Ireland should be continued to be expended in Ireland. Acting on those principles certain recommendations were made by the conference. I say at once that I regret that the Bill does not carry out those recommendations in their entirety, because I am perfectly confident that if it had been possible to carry them out they would have made a final settlement of this question without any difficulty whatever. But that is past praying for.

The Bill does not quite come up to the requirements of the Land Conference Report, and we have got to consider how nearly it comes up to it both in respect to the tenants and the owners of the land. There is a great difference after all between the suggestions of the conference and the proposals in the Bill. The conference suggested a system of periodical decadal reductions. The Bill does not provide that, and I regret it, because if a man finds himself in difficulties through a bad season or otherwise, it would be an immense encouragement to him to feel and know that in the course of a comparatively short time he would get relief by a reduction of his instalments. However, I do not pursue that, because that also is out of the question. I very thankfully admit that the Bill does offer very substantial inducement to tenant farmers to buy. I should imagine that tenant farmers will naturally, in considering whether to buy or not to buy, contrast their position if they do not purchase with their position if they do. It is, of course, impossible to say what reductions may be made on a third or fourth valuation of land in Ireland. All the *data* we have to go upon are that rents have been reduced by something like, I think, 42 per cent., that the bedrock must be reached some time or other, and that rents coming up recently for revision have received scarcely any reduction at all.

I will assume, for the sake of argument, what I think is an exaggeration, that rents would be reduced 10 per cent. on third valuation, and 10 per cent. again on fourth valuation, and I will assume that a tenant buying gets the average reduction contemplated in the Bill of 20 per cent. off his second-term rent. Take the case of two men who have had the second-term rent recently fixed. One does not buy and the other does. The man who does not buy will have to wait at any rate thirty years before he gets 20 per cent. off his second-term rent. At the end of forty-five years he will be still paying rent 20 per cent. below his second-term rent, and I think it is safe to assume that he will not have the shadow of a chance of getting any further reduction, and he will still be a tenant under a landlord without any prospect whatever of becoming the owner of the fee-simple of the land. The other man who buys will get his 20 per cent. reduction at once. In forty-five years he will have paid off two-thirds of his loan and will be within measurable distance of acquiring the fee-simple ownership of his farm, and his farm will have increased enormously in value if he wants to sell it or to raise money upon it. I think the advantages to the purchaser are enormous, and I believe that the tenant farmers of Ireland will recognise it, and admit that though the Bill does not come up to their expectations with respect to containing a system of decadal reductions, it is not very far short of the recommendations and suggestions of the Land Conference.

As to the landlords, I am bound to say that I do not think the advantages to them are quite so clear, and I should like to state what the position of the landlord is and what I think is due to them. The noble Duke observed in the beginning of his speech that landlords had given up any idea of compensation for the losses inflicted upon them by legislation. I daresay that is so. They have given up any idea of compensation because they find there is no chance of getting it; but, so far as I am concerned, I admit that Irish landlords were treated with the grossest and most iniquitous injustice. All the sophistry of all the sophists who have lived cannot get over the hard fact that solid property—property which had been freely bought and sold, which had been used as security for loans—was taken away from one set of men and given to another without one farthing of compensation. But I put that point on one side. I want to consider the situation as it now is. I have seen it often said that the Bill is extremely favourable to owners of land because under it it is possible, and perhaps certain, that they will get a larger price for their property than the average selling price which landlords' interests have obtained in the past. That is a very plausible argument, but an entirely false one.

I do not want to allude to the National League and other combinations and organisations of that kind, but I must do so to the extent of saying—and I am sure every one of your Lordships who has held the responsible position of Viceroy in Ireland will bear me out—that it is absurd to say that there has been any open and really free and unrestricted market for landlords' property in Ireland for the last thirty years. The primary object of all these combinations was to make the landlords' position untenable and his property unsaleable. I do not argue the point whether the value of the landlords' interests has been or has not been reduced below their true intrinsic value. That is arguable; but I contend that it is impossible to say that the average selling price of landlords' interests has proved to be a fair price because it has been obtained in an open and unrestricted market. The market has not been open, has not been unrestricted, and it would be perfectly idle to imagine that the great majority of landlords now left in Ireland would be prepared to sell at anything like the price that has hitherto been obtained. As a matter of fact, bankrupt stock has been sold out in a restricted market, and at a price which certainly cannot be called its true competitive value. The only way in which the value of the landlord's property can be estimated is the way in which it is estimated in the Bill, and in which it was suggested it ought to be estimated in the Land Conference Report, and that is by the income derived from judicial rents.

I think I should mention to such of your Lordships as are not conversant with Ireland, that there is a great difference between land in Ireland and land in England in two respects. My rent in England is a very precarious one. It may be varied in any year, almost any day, but my rent is fixed for me by a Judicial Court in Ireland, and is absolutely invariable for many years; and there is this point, that if my rent goes down in England, the selling value of the farm has decreased at least proportionately, but in Ireland the value may not have decreased at all. I think there are other circumstances which ought to be taken account of in considering the position of the landlords. Ought no account to be taken of the enormous sacrifice of sentiment that they will have to make? Is it reasonable to tell me that the Irish landowners are the only Irishmen who attach no importance and have no love for the soil? No man will part with a light heart, or with anything but a very sore and sad heart, with broad acres which have descended to him from father to son for generations and centuries. The landlords will cling at least as tenaciously as any other Irishman to the soil and to the traditions that cluster round the soil, and it is a heavy sacrifice that the Bill asks of them to ask them to sell.

It may be said: If landlords attach so much importance to ownership, why are they willing to sell at all? They are willing to sell because the present system in Ireland is a system not only ruining them, but ruining and demoralising the whole country, checking and crippling her industry, and smothering all her aspirations. It is an intolerable state of things, and that is the reason why landlords are willing to make this great sacrifice of sentiment and to sell, but it is not fair and reasonable to ask them also to make an actual sacrifice of income. You cannot expect men to ruin themselves and those dependent upon them. Your Lordships must remember that the very great majority of landowners in Ireland are poor men—men living or trying to live upon a very small margin of income, and they cannot sell at any price that involves a serious loss of income. It would be useless to ask them to do so. What sense would there be in asking a man to sell and make a loss of income because, if he did not, his rents might be reduced in 15 years time? The latter is a possibility, of course, and I dare say a probability; but there is always the off-chance of his rents being increased and not reduced. But in any case if you are asking a man to go to the workhouse now, and he has an alternative of not going for 15 years, I think it is probable that he would select the latter course.

This Bill gives the landlords certain collateral advantages, such, for example, as the power to sell and re-purchase their demesne lands, and it contains the grant-in-aid, and the grant-in-aid to my mind is the key of the whole situation. Why the grant-in-aid has been called a gift to landlords I have not the least idea. In the first place, it is not a gift at all, but a loan which wlll be repaid; and, in the second place, why to the landlords? If I want £100 for a horse, and one of your Lordships wants to buy it, and can only offer me £90, and a beneficent fairy trips on the scene and offers a bonus of a ten-pound note, I should have thought the bonus would have been generally considered to have been given to the purchaser and not to the seller. It matters very little which way you take it, but the grant-in-aid is an absolutely necessary grant to bridge over the gap which must exist between the price that the willing seller can take and the willing purchaser can give, and it is immaterial whether you look at it as a gift to the landlord to enable him to take the price the tenant can give, or to the tenant to enable him to offer the price which the landlord will take.

The only criticism I have to make on the grant-in-aid is that it is not quite big enough. If it had been a little bigger it would have been much wiser. It would, I believe, have been truer economy, because after all the success of this Bill is the true measure of value received for this gigantic loan that the State is making, and a little stouter and a little stronger bridge would have settled the question without any difficulty. As it is, my Lords, I am bound in honesty to say that I have some doubts whether, under the provisions of the Bill as it stands, it will be possible for the great majority of landlords to give such reduction of rent as a reasonable and prudent tenant ought to receive without making a loss of income which the landlord cannot stand.

I do not want to worry your Lordships with figures. Your Lordships can work it out for yourselves. But if you will assume that the tenant is to receive the average reduction contemplated in the Bill of 20 per cent.; if you assume that the cost of collection is 5 per cent.—and I do not think, as a matter of fact, it ought to be taken at more than 5 per cent., for although the average cost of collection over large estates is 7½ per cent. (5 per cent for agents' fees and 2½ per cent. for other expenses), in a great number of small estates there are no agents at all, with the result that if you want to get at the real effect which the Bill will have on landlords, you ought not to knock off more than 5 per cent. for collection—if you assume that the cost of collection is 5 per cent., and assume a 20 per cent. reduction, and, further, that the purchase money has to be invested in trust securities, and will not bring in more than 3¼ per cent., you will find that the result to the landlord will be a loss of £10 on every £90 of income. And that is too large. It will take, roughly speaking, the whole of the grant-in-aid and the 3½ per cent. investment to enable the landlord to give 20 per cent. off second-term rents and not make a loss. I am not sure that under the Bill as it now stands that can in the great majority of cases be done.

I do not propose to allude to large portions of the Bill—those which apply to the Congested Districts Board or to labourers. I take it that the sections applying to the Congested Districts Board are more or less experimental; that is to say, that if they do not succeed in the objects the Government aim at, further legislation on that subject may become necessary; and it is admitted that the portions of the Bill dealing with the labourers are more or less of a provisional character, so I will not touch upon them at all. The two points I do wish to bring before the House are, first, the uncertainty that exists as to the amount of legal expenses which will have to be deducted from the grant-in-aid; and, secondly, the rate of distribution of the bonus. I do not understand what the Bill proposes to do about legal expenses incidental to proving title to the purchase money, and if any Member of His Majesty's Government intends to speak on this Bill and will explain what the various clauses which deal with the subject mean I should be very grateful, for I do not understand them. It is obvious that some portion of these legal expenses are to be chargeable to the expenses of the Land Commission, but what portion, and how much, nobody knows.

Is it not obvious that the one thing more than another likely to deter landowners from selling is the uncertainty as to the income they will have after selling, and I do beg of His Majesty's Government to most seriously consider whether it is not possible, without increasing the money required, to relieve the landlords, not only of the legal expenses incidental to proving title to the land, but also of the legal expenses incidental to proving title to the purchase money, and if that is impossible, at any rate to make it perfectly clear what proportion of those expenses will be chargeable as expenses of the Land Commission. Of course, I do not mean that the State should take over all the legal expenses. There will, of course, always be private legal expenses in connection with the sale, which should be borne by the landlord; but if this measure is to be as successful as we all hope it will be, the requirements of the Land Commission ought to be satisfied by the Land Commission and be chargeable to the expenses of the Land Commission.

I would remind your Lordships in connection with that, that a not inconsiderable slice has been cut off from the landlords in the other House of Parliament. The instalments are the basis and foundation of the whole transaction, and as the Bill was introduced on the instalment, whatever it might be, a certain advance was made based on the fact that seven-eighths of the loan was to be liquidated in 68½ years; but as the Bill comes up to your Lordships' House the whole of the loan, and not seven-eighths of it, has to be liquidated in 68½ years, and, as a necessary consequence, the advance to be made on any instalment, whatever it may be, is proportionately less. That amount, whatever it may be—something between 2 millions and 3 millions—must come out of the landlords' pockets and must go back into the pockets of the Treasury. Well, half of that, or not so much as half of it, would certainly be sufficient to ensure that no portion of the expenses incidental to proving title to land should be borne by the selling landlord. The grant-in-aid is, as I say, the great factor of the situation. It is the one thing that will enable landlords and tenants to come together; and as long as there is this indefinite mortgage hanging over the grant-in-aid, I am afraid that a very serious drag will exist to prevent sales.

Then I object to the grant-in-aid being distributed at the rate of 12 per cent. The bonus is a definite sum of £12,000,000. The capitalised value of the whole of the property to be dealt with is estimated by His Majesty's Government at £100,000,000, and £12,000,000 on £100,000,000 is 12 per cent. Therefore the bonus is to be distributed at the rate of 12 per cent., but there is about £20,000,000 worth of property in the hands of the Land Judge's Court, which is not eligible to receive any bonus at all. The £12,000,000 is therefore distributable on £80,000,000 and not on £100,000,000, and £12,000,000 on £80,000,000 is 15 per cent., and not 12 per cent.; the initial rate of distribution ought, therefore, to be 15, and not 12 per cent. I admit that it may be found after a time that the capitalized value of the property to be dealt with has been underestimated. I admit, too, that it may be found that the value of the property in the Land Judge's Court has been overestimated. I do not think so. But what I would point out to your Lordships is this—that the rate of distribution is variable every five years, and if it is found after five, ten, or fifteen years, that the £12,000,000 will not go round, the rate of distribution can be diminished. I do not want one farthing more money from the Treasury. All I want to be certain of is that this £12,000,000 is not only receivable, but is received; and to make sure of that you must commence with an initial rate of 15 per cent. If you find, after five years, that that is too much, you can reduce it to whatever is necessary. That would be a perfectly just, fair, and reasonable thing to do. But if you begin at 12 per cent., it would be manifestly unjust to landlords who had sold to increase it, and it would be offering a distinct inducement to landlords not to sell, but to hold on until they could get more than 12 per cent., and it would tend to destroy the whole value of the operation of the Bill.

I would ask His Majesty's Government to consider that matter, and see whether, without making any further demand upon the Treasury, which I do not for a moment propose to do, it is not advisable that the initial rate of distribution should be 15 per cent. I believe if the Bill can be amended in that direction it will work smoothly and satisfactorily. If it cannot be so amended, I am bound to say I have some fear that it may prove disappointing to those who, like myself, desire to see a clean, business-like, final settlement of this vexed question. It has often been asked whether this Bill, if successful, will settle the Irish question; and it has been stated that whether the Bill passes or not there will always be an Irish question. I sincerely hope so. But of one thing I am pretty sure, that if this Bill does make a final and amicable settlement of questions of land tenure, the majority of those questions will be settled without any very great difficulty. I should be sorry to prophesy, but I should not mind saying that if this question is finally and amicably settled, all other questions will be approached and discussed and debated in Ireland in a very different spirit from that which has obtained up to the present.

Whether it will settle the land question depends, I think, to a considerable extent on whether the Bill can be amended in the directions I have indicated. It depends, also, of course, upon the view taken of the Bill, and the attitude assumed towards it, by the two classes mainly interested—the landlords and the tenants. If the landlords are exorbitant in their demands the tenants will not be able to buy, and the Bill will be a failure; if the tenants are exorbitant in their demands the landlords will not be able to sell, and the Bill will be a failure. If, as I believe, the vast majority of both owners and occupiers of land desire to treat each other fairly in this matter, and are honestly anxious to understand each other's position and each other's requirements and difficulties, and will act in that spirit, then the Bill is capable of settling the land question, and, if it does, it would be impossible to exaggerate the good effect that would be produced in Ireland. The Bill is capable of relieving Ireland from the kind of nightmare under which she has struggled for centuries; it is capable of giving her a system of land tenure suitable to the characteristics of the country and to the character and genius of the people; it is capable of acting as a healthy, wholesome stimulus to the main, and almost the only industry of Ireland—agriculture—and, by fostering a more manly, self-dependent spirit, of encouraging Ireland to labour energetically and successfully in developing whatever other industries she is capable of supporting. I believe the Bill has it in it to convert the people of Ireland from a sad and despondent frame of mind to a healthy and energetic one; to foster a real, manly, self-dependent national spirit among them; and if the Bill has that effect it will do even a great deal more than accomplish the regeneration of Ireland—because, although the British Empire is very wealthy and very vast, and Ireland is very small and very poor, still it must not be forgotten that in these islands the heart of the Empire lies.

*THE EARL OF LYTTON: My Lords, although not so closely interested as many of your Lordships in this Bill, I venture to take part in this discussion as an Englishman who nevertheless takes a very deep and sympathetic interest in the affairs of Ireland. The subject of this Bill is not really a political one; it is essentially an economical one. Nevertheless, it is the political consequences which it may have which loom large in the minds of those who are discussing it. Is it going to be final? Does it mean peace? Is it going to terminate that ancient feud between the landlords and tenants of Ireland which has hitherto proved so disastrous to the interests of their common country? How will it affect the question of Home Rule? Will it make the government of Ireland more easy or more difficult in the future? All these are questions which have been very freely debated in this country since the introduction of the Bill, and they are questions round which attention has been concentrated, even, I think, to the exclusion of the real issue, which is the effect the Bill will have on the economic situation in Ireland. For it is with the Irish land system that we are really dealing, and the main subject for consideration is the present system of land tenure in Ireland as compared with the system which, encouraged by this Bill, is going, we hope, to take its place.

It is no more possible in this House than it was in the House of Commons to have a perfectly disinterested economic discussion, because those of your Lordships who are Irish landlords cannot ignore the effect which the Bill will have upon themselves personally, and they cannot fail to look to their own interests in this matter. But I feel, and I say it with all deference, that the main interests of the landlords of Ireland are bound up with this Bill. The noble Duke who presides over the Landowners' Convention said that no money could compensate the landlords for the sacrifices of sentiment which they were going to make, and the noble Lord who has just spoken also referred to the position in which the landlords stood. I say at once that I feel the greatest possible sympathy with Irish landlords and with the sacrifices which they may have to make. But are there then no drawbacks to the present position of an Irish landlord, and will there be no compensation if this Bill, as I think it does, affords them an opportunity which they have never had before, of associating themselves with a great national movement, of assuming their rightful position as the leaders of Irish opinion and sympathisers with Irish aspirations, and of surrounding themselves with those feelings of affection and of confidence which, unfortunately, the circumstances attaching to their present position have prevented them from enjoying? For, my Lords, this Bill marks a current of events, an evolution of circumstances, which is absolutely inevitable.

I do not think that any of your Lordships will defend on economic grounds the present system of dual ownership of land in Ireland. However necessary the Act of 1881 may have been politically, no one, I think, will urge that a system under which it is the interest both of the landlord and the tenant to neglect the land is the best possible system which can be devised in the interests of agriculture generally. The system of periodical revision of rent by a judicial body has done incalculable damage to agriculture in Ireland. It has impoverished the soil, embittered still more the relations between landlord and tenant, and the only outcome of this system has been perpetual litigation and unrest. What, then, are you to do? You cannot take away from the tenant the part ownership of his land which he already enjoys. You cannot sweep away the Act of 1881 and establish in its place a system of tenure such as we have in England, a system which is based on a free and generous competition between landlord and tenant. Past history shows that such a system as that is not workable in Ireland, because such competition is only possible where those who compete for the land have other pursuits to fall back on where they are unsuccessful, and this is not the case in Ireland. There are no other pursuits in that country. The Irish peasant is obliged either to cultivate his land or else to leave the country, and that circumstance alone is sufficient to make the system which we have in England impossible in Ireland. But at the same time you cannot be content with the present situation. You cannot stand still, you must go forward; and the only way out of the present situation is, therefore, by means of purchase.

We have not to consider what would be an ideal system of land tenure if we were free to choose. The problem with which we are faced is what system is best adapted to existing circumstances, and, therefore, whatever the disadvantage may be of the system of peasant proprietorship, it is the only possible alternative, and that is why we are asked to pass another Land Purchase Bill. I am perfectly aware that there are already some twenty-eight Land Purchase Acts upon the Statute-book, but as compared with this Bill they are all tentative and inadequate. This will be the first Act which really aims at making purchase universal upon a voluntary basis. Its provisions for simplifying the proof of title, for the purchase of estates *in globo*, for the repurchase by owners of their demesne land for dealing with the problem of congestion, these, as well as the cash bonus, all go far beyond anything attempted under any former Act.

But the most remarkable and most hopeful fact about the present Bill is that it is the outcome of an agreement that it is based upon a concordat between the two parties, which for so long and with such disastrous results have been irreconcilably opposed. This, at any rate, is no act of tardy justice obtained by force, grudgingly conceded on the one hand and grudgingly accepted on the other. It is a piece of legislation which both landlords and tenants have united in asking the Government to pass and which both have been prepared in their common interests to make some sacrifices to obtain. My Lords, if the spirit that has made this Bill possible had been present in former years we should not have had to wait so long for a measure of this sort; much strife and bitterness might have been prevented, and the energy and ingenuity which has been wasted in unproductive political warfare might, if spent in the cultivation of the land, have made Ireland to-day a rich and prosperous country.

From first to last in the negotiations which have led up to the introduction of this Bill and during its passage through the House of Commons, largely, we must admit, owing to the tact and ability of the present Chief Secretary, there has been a spirit of co-operation between all parties interested. The landlords and tenants on the one hand have shown a readiness to do each other justice, and England on the other hand has proved herself willing to help Ireland to carry out a great measure of economic reform. It is, therefore, of the utmost importance that nothing should be done in this House and that no note should be sounded to impair the harmony which has up to now been the most hopeful feature in in the recent transactions.

At the same time, we cannot forget that whereas the representatives of the tenants largely predominate in the House of Commons, the landlords not only predominate in this House, but the tenants are not represented at all. There may therefore be a temptation to press unduly the claim of one party, and I venture to hope that those of your Lordships who, as the Duke of Devonshire has reminded us, are loyal to the principle of this Bill and yet regard it with little enthusiasm, will remember that it rests on the basis of an agreement, and will do nothing, therefore, which, though otherwise desirable, might injure the very foundation on which it rests.

My Lords, I cannot help feeling that this is an occasion unprecedented in the history of Irish legislation, and that the hopes that we are now on the threshold of a new period of prosperity in Ireland—a period of social peace and industrial activity—are not mere idle fancies, are not the hopes of mere ignorant enthusiasts, but are based on tangible facts and actual experience. First, we have the solid fact of the present conciliatory spirit in Irish politics—a fact which was emphasised during the recent triumphal visit of the King and Queen to Ireland. Secondly, we have the experience of those tenants who have actually bought their holdings under previous Acts.

Those of your Lordships who have read the report made by Mr. Bailey will realise how satisfactory that experience has been. I have that report here and I had intended to make some quotations from it, but as your Lordships are all aware of the nature of the experience of land purchase in the past in Ireland I shall not trouble you now by recurring to the report. But we have other examples to go upon.

We have the experience of the working of this system in Denmark. That is an essentially agricultural country, and is full of interest to students of the Irish problem. Crushed and ruined at the beginning of the century, and with nothing but her agriculture to go upon, she has gradually and with the most extraordinary spirit worked her way back into complete prosperity. In 1840 her population was only a little over 1,000,000, whereas to-day it is 2,500,000. Emigration has steadily diminished, and the figures which in 1891 were 10,000 are to-day only 4,000. Fifty years ago the country was on the verge of bankruptcy, but to-day it is not only a flourishing agricultural community, but it stands second among the nations of the world as the richest in average per head of its population. The means by which these results have been attained are so interesting in connection with Ireland that I will venture to refer your Lordships to some of the facts brought to light by a deputation which was sent out to Denmark by the Irish Department of Agriculture. The most important fact which has contributed to Danish prosperity is the establishment of a peasant proprietary, both for the large farmer and the agricultural labourer. It has been found that the consciousness of power and independence which ownership conferred upon the occupier produced a corresponding earnestness of pursuit, and enabled the Danish farmer to triumph over every difficulty. My Lords, if this Bill achieves its object we may look for similar results in Ireland.

The second factor is the adoption of co-operative methods in every department of agriculture, including credit and loan societies. The principle of co-operation is happily well understood in Ireland, and thanks to the life-work of Mr. Horace Plunkett—Sir Horace Plunkett, as we are now able to call him, and I take this opportunity of congratulating the right hon. Gentleman upon this new distinction—the associative qualities of the Irishman are now being turned to the most profitable account.

But perhaps the most important of all the forces at work in Denmark is the splendid system of education given in the popular high schools, the influence of which is visible in every phase of the agricultural, industrial, and commercial life of that country, and which has been the chief means of preventing the excessive subdivision and mortgaging of land, which is the greatest danger attaching to any extensive system of land purchase. The education aims not only at providing practical and technical instruction, but also at the formation of character among the peasant workers, inspiring them with zeal to make the most of their newly acquired possessions, and with enlightened views of the duties and responsibilities of citizenship, and above all impressing upon them the dignity which attaches universally in Denmark to agricultural employment. Such a system we have not yet complete in Ireland, but we have the elements out of which it may be formed. In the first place we have the advanced system of technical instruction given by the Department of Agriculture. Then we have the practical, sound educational work performed by the Organisation Society, and if these two systems of education can only be supplemented by and co-ordinated with a sound general elementary system of education, Ireland will have a system complete and well suited to her needs. That, my Lords, is a work for the future, but which I hope will be undertaken before very long after the passage of this Bill.

Finally there is one other feature which we cannot ignore at this moment, and which seems to bear on the remarks made by Lord Crewe. It is felt by the Danish farmer that the raw material out of which he has to make his industrial successes must belong to him just as much as does the land. He, therefore, attaches the greatest importance to the freedom from duty of imports of agricultural produce. I also find that several years ago, when the question of a general free trade policy for Denmark was discussed in the Danish Parliament, a petition in favour of it was signed by 30,000 farmers in Jutland.

My only reason for this digression is to show that all the elements which have contributed to the economic development of Denmark, are present to-day in Ireland, and with that example before us we can look with some confidence to the future. If your Lordships will not only accept this Bill, but will go further and give encouragement to the carrying out of its provisions, and to the establishment of a peasant proprietary, you will have done much to hasten the arrival of the day when we can cease to look with shame on Ireland as a distracted and disunited country, a standing reproach to British statesmanship, and an abiding menace to the stability of our Empire, but can rather point to it with pride as a country at peace with others and at unity with itself, as the one land in all the British dominions where a people, unspoiled by the vanities and perplexities of modern civilisation, have found, in a cheerful devotion to honourable toil, a new national ideal which they can open their hearts to receive and give their lives to perpetuate.

*LORD ORANMORE AND BROWNE: My Lords, it is on this House that the landlords must depend for Amendments and changes to make the Bill a workable measure. In the first place I protest strongly against the suggestion that this Bill is a boon to the Irish landlords. We have no wish to part with our property. In many cases our estates have been held by the same families for centuries, and we have the same affection for our old homes as your lordships feel for your homes in this country. We do not wish to become a sort of glorified villa residents enclosed in our own park wall, and separated in sympathy from the outer world, but we wish to live as Irishmen among Irishmen.

But to turn from sentiment to a practical point dealt with by Lord Crewe, we have been listening for the last two months to the voice of the charmer in the person of the Colonial Secretary, and many of us have thought to find in his terms an Ireland regenerated without a revolution, to find an increase of agricultural produce and stock, to such an extent as to cause even the Sub-Commissioner to increase our rents, and the tenants to pay with as much alacrity and cheerfulness as the British workmen will doubtless pay for the dearer loaf. But how will it affect the country at large? I do not wish to be a Cassandra when so many Unionists as well as Nationalists look upon the Bill as opening a new era for Ireland. I think that after this Bill is passed a great number of smaller landlords will leave the country, and I doubt whether the loss of so many men of wealth and culture will not be a serious loss to the country.

Co-operation is not a word that is very popular to the average Irishman, and yet it is co-operation alone, if we are to judge from the experience of other countries, that we must look to for the success of this system.

Again, take the climate of Ireland, it is a country of moisture-laden breezes wafted from the Atlantic. They give us that rich verdure for which Ireland is so famous, and enable us to raise stock for the English market, but continuous rain is very detrimental to tillage, and seems to point to the fact that the main parts of Ireland are more suitable to be a pastoral rather than an agricultural country.

I am prepared to vote for the Second Reading because I believe that, bad as the solution is, it is the only practical and possible solution of the Irish land question. The system of dual ownership was sown in 1881, and it has been so richly manured since by Liberal and Tory statesmen that it has borne a plentiful harvest. All that we can do is by Amendments to try and make the measure fair to all parties, and no one will be more pleased than I if that can be done with success, and my prognostications regarding the economic evil come to nothing. To make it a success, not only must the tenants be willing to buy and the landlords to sell, but that they will not be unless they are paid their price. The landlords will have £100,000,000. What will they do with it? It should be used as an asset for the development of the country. Let the Nationalists show that the land war is ended by inviting co-operation in every branch, of public life, of those who are loyal, but are not less Irishmen than themselves. Let there be a reign of law and order instead of one of terror and oppression, and they will find amongst the landlords many who are ready to help on the good work, and who are willing to sacrifice themselves, if by their sacrifice they can benefit the country to which they belong, and make, it as it has been poetically described, the first flower of the earth and the first gem of the sea.

*THE EARL OF BELMORE: My Lords, in the few observations I have to make I do not propose to discuss the general principles of the Bill, but I come to consideration of the question from a different point of view, possibly, from some who have spoken before, because I believe I have probably as much experience as any person in Ireland of the practical working of former Land Acts. I began to make preparations to sell parts of my estate so far back as 1881 or 1882, and I only succeeded in getting the final purchase money distributed last year. My experience extends over all the Acts of twenty years past.

The noble Duke alluded to the question of zones, and expressed the hope that no alteration would be made to them. Lord Crewe expressed the same opinion, and I concur in it. I think the Bill of this year as first introduced was a better Bill than that of last year, and it is still better as it is now before your Lordships. I have not heard any of my noble friends propose such an injudicious course as to alter the provisions of the Bill with regard to zones. The alteration made in the House of Commons on this point cuts both ways.

A good many of my Irish friends are afraid they will suffer because of the possibility of the Estates Commissioners being able to sell below the lower limit. But there is another limit to be considered, and I am perfectly satisfied with the alteration made in the House of Commons.

Another point of great importance which the noble Duke touched upon lightly, about which Lord Dunraven made some remarks, was the omission of the ten years reductions. I am very sorry that these reductions have been abolished. They were first granted some years ago, and it appeared to me that it was a sort of boon granted to the tenants which it was impossible to take away. The tenants thereby knew what bargain they were making, as they knew the price would be reduced in ten years and further reduced ten years afterwards. I am told that these reductions were really a security to the State, and I think that this question is pretty sure to come up again in some future session. All the tenants under the Ashbourne Act of 1896 had a reduction of 9 per cent. The 1896 purchasers will have a reduction of 14 per cent. now, and surely the tenant who buys in the future will think it very hard when he sees his neighbour getting 14 per cent., and feels that he is shut out from the reduction clauses. Our object in passing this Bill is that it should work, and I feel certain that the system of sale reduction is one of the most important in the working of the Bill.

We come next to the question of sporting rights. In that connection many people tell me that a great many landlords will go from the country when the Bill is passed. My Lords, that is not my opinion, and I know a good deal about the smaller landlords in the North of Ireland. I am told that they will sell if they can without loss. I know the history of many families in that country having incomes ranging from £500 to £1,500 a year, and being of the small landlord class. I am sure if they leave the country and go to England, they will lose in social position, because in Ireland they may take their turns in holding public offices, such, for instance, as the High Sheriff; [which is no longer an office of great expenses], but if they go to an English watering place they would abandon those privileges.

Lord Crewe alluded to the Act of 1881, and said if that Act had not been passed it would have been impossible to bring in an Act of this kind. I do not agree with him. I regret that Mr. Gladstone in 1881 did not bring in an Act of this kind, because the ordnance valuation of that day was considerably below the letting value of the land, and even Mr. Parnell, the then leader of the Nationalist Party, would have been quite content at that period to take the ordnance surveys as the basis on which the landlords could sell and the tenants could buy. I think the landlords in the long run will sell very generally. Of course they cannot all sell at once, and it is pretty well known that the present system of deeds and registration in Ireland make it impossible to sell at the rate of more than 1,000,000 per year. It will thus take thirty years before it will be possible for all the landlords to sell, and the thing cannot be completed in less than a generation.

Then the noble Earl regretted that there was no time limit in which the landlords should be compelled to make up their minds to sell. I think a time limit would have been quite futile, because, if the landlords in five years had not made up their minds there would have been pressure by the tenants and Parliament would then have been asked to extend the time limit.

Then with regard to the best security with regard to the tenant's improvements. I think the best security is the tenant's self interest. Lord Dunraven pointed out that when a man had repaid a portion of the loan it would be suicidal for a tenant to allow himself to be sold up by the Land Commissioners. I have had a good deal to do with tenants, and excepting one single case I never knew them to act in anything else but their self interest. The noble Lord alluded to Mr. Chamberlain's policy and said if that were carried out it would raise the value of Irish lands so that the landlords would be unwilling to sell.

THE EARL OF CREWE: I said the expectation of the value of land being raised would unsettle the minds of possible sellers and would discourage them from selling.

* THE EARL OF BELMORE: So far as I understand Mr. Chamberlain's policy, and I am more in agreement with it than most of your Lordships, I do not think it will raise the price of food. I think we may put that argument on one side. We are not changing the method of cultivation, but are merely changing the ownership of existing farms, which will be cultivated in precisely the same manner as before. A great part of the land that has already been sold has been so treated as to be considerably improved.

My Lords, I have only one other observation to make. Lord Lytton made some remarks with regard to industrial work. He does not seem to be aware that that is much more in existence than he knows of. There is a movement going on in Ireland at the present moment for an industrial revival, and the establishment of exhibitions, and there has been introduced into Ireland what is called technical instruction in the schools. I had the honour a few years ago to be the Chairman of a Commission on Manual and Practical Instruction, and we presented a Report upon this matter. So far as I can learn about one-third of the schools in Ireland are now beginning to put the recommendations of that Report in operation and therefore I think there is every prospect of industrial education being given and industrial avocations meeting with great success in that country. In Committee I may have to move a few non-contentious Amendments, but all I need say now is that I most heartily support the Government in asking the House to read the Bill a second time.

THE EARL OF DONOUGHMORE: The subject of this Bill has been very largely discussed, and in the peculiar circumstances of the case of there being no opposition, it naturally follows that the field over which successive speakers can go is a very small one. There is one point I venture to submit to your Lordships. I say that this evening is a very remarkable one in the history of Ireland, more especially as it affects Irish landlords. For the first time we have been offered compensation for all our sufferings from land legislation in the past. What is that compensation? That is offered by Lord Lytton, and it is that we are to enter into Ireland's national aspirations. That is to say, we are to turn good disloyal Home Rulers, we are to fly the green flag, we are to have as a crest a harp without a crown, and Ireland as a nation is to be the motto for us to adopt. I confess that on first acquaintance I do not like the idea at all.

I rejoice extremely at the extraordinary unanimity with which this Bill has been received in this House and in the country. The reason is perfectly plain. It cannot be denied that this is the first real attempt to grapple with the whole evil set up by the Act of 1881. I do not wish to enter into details of the Act of 1881. The most cursory inspection shows a state of things absolutely grotesque. I do not wish to enter into a free trade discussion, but it is an undoubted fact that whereas free trade may be suited to this country, it has proved most disastrous to Ireland. At the present time the linen industry has been ruined by foreign competition, and although I do not wish to follow Lord Crewe into the future, I really believe if it were a case of a fight between free trade and protection, you will find a solid body of Irish farmers in favour of protection.

I do not wish to belabour a very dead horse, which has met its death through official neglect—I refer to the Report of the Financial Relations Commission. I would only remind your Lordships that there is a debt of £300,000,000 that England owes to Ireland, for which we should be very glad to receive a cheque on account. But leaving that on one side, the cardinal justification of this Bill lies in the evils of the Act of 1881, and it is a remarkable fact that we have had a noble Lord on the front bench opposite acknowledging those evils. In the course of the discussion on this Bill very little attention has been given to the price the tenants will have to pay. An idea has grown up that sales will go through within the zones and even within the lower part of the zones. I cannot realise the truth of that. Under the Acts of 1885 and 1888 the tenants paid at eighteen years purchase for first-term rents. That is on a very broad assumption for all classes of land, and at that time the price of land stock was very high, it being £115, therefore rents, which were 20 per cent. more than they are now, were being sold, and the landlord got three years purchase more than his nominal price. That is to say, a purchaser of a similar farm now sold at a similar price would have to pay twenty-eight years purchase to give the landlord the same amount of money. The point I wish to make is that if this Bill is to work the tenants of Ireland must realise that they will have to give a fair price, and by a fair price I mean a price larger than they have grown up to the present, if they wish to profit by the unexampled conditions under the Bill.

Without going into details, as I know this is a Second Reading debate, there are two or three questions to which I wish to refer, and thus clear the ground in view of what may happen in the Committee stage. First, there is a question of sporting rights. I will ask your Lordships to consider what is the state of affairs with reference to these rights. The exact words of the clause show that they may be reserved for the landlord, and may be transferred to the tenant. What does that mean? It means that the sporting rights are to enter into the bargain to be made between the landlord and tenant. You are entering into a bargain based on the rent price, and that is, in Ireland, nothing more than the agricultural value of the land. And yet the tenant is to come along and say the Bill gives him the right to bargain, therefore he is going to pay three or four years less purchase if the landlord keeps these rights. I believe the object of the Bill is to carry out the present state of affairs in this respect, but the wording of the Bill as drafted by the Solicitor-General for England does nothing of the kind. The result will be that the price will tend to be lowered, and it naturally follows that the landlord who is not keen to sell will not dream of selling at the tenant's price, and in that way the Bill will defeat itself.

I hold it is absolutely necessary, in fairness to us, as well as for the good prospects and working of the Bill, that it should be absolutely laid down that the present state of affairs is not to be interfered with, and that these sporting rights are not to enter into the bargain between the landlord and tenant. It has been said this evening that the landlords should be encouraged to stay in the country. That is a self-evident fact, for the country needs the spending class in it. But there is another thing about these sporting rights. It is to the interest of the whole of the country that they should be kept up, because they bring money into the country from outside. We have all made money over our sporting rights in letting our shooting boxes, and the shooting and fishing. I have a pleasing recollection of receiving rent for fishing in dry seasons when the foreigner was engaged in whipping the streams all day long with very poor effect.

It is essential to encourage sportsmen of all countries, and these sporting facilities as such are an important asset to the country. Who has looked to the matter in the past ? The landlords have kept up the whole thing out of their private pockets and, at the present time we have an organisation ready to do it. We have the necessary keepers and trained watchers, and all necessaries for the work, whereas the tenants know nothing about it whatever. I consider the question of fox covers is particularly important, because that means hunting, and if hunting goes horse breeding goes, and if horse breeding goes the one pre-eminent Irish industry disappears ; that is to say, the only thing that keeps a great many heads above water goes, and unless we have these sporting rights the sport will die out in the country. We have an organisation called the Irish Game Protection Association, and they have published a memorandum in connection with this Bill which coincides with my own experience. It runs as follows :—

> "The almost universal experience of the members of the association has been that where the game rights have been vested in the tenants in a sale of their farms under the existing Land Acts, such game rights are utterly neglected and the game rapidly exterminated. For years past the association has been endeavouring to make the tenants realise the money loss which they were suffering by their foolish acts in this respect, but with small success."

I therefore claim that it is for the good of the country that the sporting rights should be kept as our rights, and that whenever the Land Commission gets hold of them we shall have a right of pre-emption. I hope an Amendment on this point, if moved, will be received by the Government in a sympathetic manner.

My only other point is as to the question of mineral rights. At present, in the Bill, they are very unsatisfactory and subject to very unfair conditions. All present rights that we are now using are retained, but all undeveloped and prospective rights go to the Land Commission. In the end the Treasury is to have every thing that is at present not worked under the surface of Ireland, and is to give no payment for it whatever. We cannot blame the Treasury, but I cannot believe that the Government seriously contemplate taking them away from us in a Bill which gives the price of our possessions, calculated merely on the value of the surface of the soil, and afterwards to work under it for their own profit. There are lots of undeveloped minerals in the land, and when the Government get hold of them they are sure to be able to work them under their own conditions, and I do most strongly claim that in the event of their doing so at least 50 per cent. of the profit or rent shall go back to the pockets of the present landlord. If not what landlord with any chance of such development will ever be got to sell his property.

In conclusion I would only point to one thing in support of what the noble Duke said at the conclusion of his speech. There is a great difference in the treatment of the Irish Land Bill in this House and in another place. The Government, of course, is equally represented in both Houses but this Bill concerns three bodies, the Government, the tenants and the land lords. In another place there is a great body of tenants' representation which is very well able to make its opinion heard. On our side there are four or five very stalwart representatives who do their best, but there are a few very unstalwart representatives who never come near the place at all. This is the one opportunity that we have to put our case in any great volume forward, and I can only re-echo the hope expressed by the noble Duke the Duke of Abercorn that the Government will consider our Amendments sympathetically, and after what the noble Duke the Duke of Devonshire has said, I am sure he will do so. I know that the session is far advanced and that we are all very anxious to get away from London but our only object will be to make the Bill a workable measure and I hope that the Government will favourably regard our Amendments which will be put forward with that sole object.

LORD EMLY: My Lords, the Government have listened to and heard the landlord. They have not sent him empty away. They have listened to and heard the tenant. They have made some concessions to the evicted tenants, they have reconsidered the zone clauses, and they have effected a compromise in the matter of the game clause. The labourer has been kicked downstairs. It is as the duly accredited spokesman of the labouring poor that I venture to address you and to plead in their name that this Bill—this Magna Charta obtained by the farmers of Ireland—may not be defaced by an omission so vital and so monstrous as the total exclusion from its benefits of the artisans and labourers of Ireland. Mr. Wyndham, not very long ago, in the course of a speech delivered when he was the guest of the Manchester Conservative Club, explained that "Ireland was a country mainly agricultural, deprived of mineral wealth, without the alternative open to the rural dwellers in England." In other words that labour in Ireland is handicapped as labour is not handicapped in England; that labour is on a different footing in Ireland to what it is in England. Where is our woollen trade? Where is our cotton industry? Where is our iron trade? Where are our more complicated trades? We are not even firmly founded on jam and pickles. Mr. Wyndham took the Conservative Club into his confidence and explained the reason of all this—that England had not given justice to Ireland. Well, we will let it rest at that. In England the agricultural labourer is better paid and is better housed than in Ireland. His winter wages, his summer wages, are rising; his hours of work are shorter than they used to be. Yet in England the land is going out of cultivation and the rural population is migrating and crowding into the towns and cities. The enormous population of England is ever increasing. Well, what do you say to your labourers in England? You invite them to go back to the land. You have them still with you. They are there, and yet you are alarmed, and are right in being alarmed, because you foresee that the depletion of your rural population might, in certain circumstances, easily become a grave national danger. In Ireland the attenuated population is still dwindling. It is not a case of migration, but of emigration. In 1902 the number of emigrants who left Irish ports was 40,401, or 9·1 per 1,000 of the estimated population of Ireland in the middle of that year. In comparison with the year 1901 the number of emigrants, natives of Ireland, shows an increase of 577. Of the 18,893 males who emigrated no less than 14,235 were labourers. There were 774 farmers, Ulster accounting for 494 of these 774 farmers. The remaining 3,884 male emigrants belonged to the artisan class. The 21,508 female emigrants belonged to the agricultural labourer class. It is therefore very obvious what class in Ireland is being maltreated and scourged. It is the class of agricultural labourers. Now let me return to Mr. Wyndham's speech at Manchester. "It was to our interest," he said, "that Ireland should be prolific and satisfied. It must be the desire and hope of every true Imperialist that she should become a bridge instead of as now a chasm between ourselves and Canada." The blood of Ireland has been poured out like rain. For nigh 100 years the emigration has been going on. It is by millions we count the enforced exodus of our people to the United States. Their seed has increased and multiplied; their children—a brilliant galaxy—are the shrewd, long-headed business men, the merchant princes, the millionaire bankers, the foremost statesmen of America, and while our emigrants are often unskilled in industrial labour, their children, enabled to develop their talents, are second to none in industrial success. I beg you to remember that it is the child of the exile, the child of the labourer, and the child of the artisan who has subsidised every national movement in Ireland. When Mr. Wyndham asks us to be satisfied I say, "Satisfied with what?" Is it satisfied with the back of the hand of the Government? Prolific in what? Prolific in bullocks? And when he talks about a bridge what does he mean? Oh yes, I understand. A bridge, the girders of which will be the 40,000 bright-eyed boy and girl exiles of 1902. I repeat Mr. Wyndham's words, "That Ireland is a country mainly agricultural, deprived of mineral wealth, without the alternative open to the rural dwellers in England." It is therefore to the land that we must look in Ireland. This Bill ignores even the existence of the very class which supplies our emigrants—the artisans and the labourers. They cannot live, like a snipe, on suction. This Bill will not so much as keep one caubeen or one petticoat from the dire necessity of embarking on the emigrant ship.

My Lords, the artisans and the labourers should have their share of the purchased land. The labourers should sit down at the banquet. The same facilities should be afforded to the occupiers of labourers' cottages and plots for the purchase of their cottages and plots as are contemplated to be afforded to the farming community. That is only bare justice. That is a clause which should be inserted in the Land Bill. Is the British taxpayer invited to be kind merely in order to create a new order of landlordism whilst artisans and labourers are told to stand down? Of course such a clause as I have outlined would have unfortunately only a very limited application. The administration of the Labourers Acts is at present a farce and a scandal. The unfortunate labourer, who is looking for a cottage is at the mercy of a board, publicly his sincere good friends, but privately his sincere good enemies, pulling the ropes the other way and working the oracle against him. He is sent from post to pillar like a fool on Fool's Day. He is cornered, he is cajoled, he is tricked, he is often at times threatened many ways—with loss of employment for instance. He is induced to apply for a cottage on the only site where he cannot obtain a cottage. It is the bad bit of land that is flung to him. When his application is opposed, and it is opposed on every and any flimsy pretext, he has no friend to fight his cause for love or money. The weight of officialdom is inexorably thrown in the balance against him. As a matter of fact the Labourers Acts remain a dead letter in the country. In a certain county there are no labourers' cottages, in other counties there are whole districts where there are no labourers' cottages. Where the instituted authorities so neglect their obligations towards the labourers, labourers' cottage schemes should be compulsorily adopted by a specially constituted and impartial authority. The men who have locked up every penny available for the working of the Labourers Acts should be forthwith relieved of their uncongenial responsibilities. The fox should not be left to feed the poultry. My Lords, these are the only observations I wish to make on the subject of the labourers. If I have spoken with a certain amount of heat, all I can say is that I feel very much at heart the present condition of the labourers of Ireland.

*THE EARL OF ARRAN: My Lords, I crave your indulgence because this is the first time I have ventured to address your Lordships' House, but since this measure before you affects Ireland, and so vitally, I venture to place myself before you. The Irish land question, my Lords, is a question which, if we may judge by the forty odd Land Bills of the past forty years, is a riddle which still requires a complete solution, and unlike most riddles it cannot be given up, for each Government in its turn has to find some youthful statesman, or some statesman with the courage of youth, on whom falls the duty of trying to find a successful answer to the riddle. It has long been held that the only road toward the pacification of Ireland lies through the transfer of the freehold in Irish land from the landlord to the tenant, and I believe that this idea has at least been held by the majority of Scotch and English statesmen, who, during comparatively recent years, have had the control of Irish affairs. I do not wish to be a marplot or to suggest any unhappy idea of the scheme before us, but we must remember that there are many men who by reason of life-long residence in Ireland can claim as much experience and knowledge of that country as anyone, and many of them hold that such a transfer, while proving a temporary panacea will yet plunge the country into a worse condition. I do not hold either of those opinions myself, because I cannot but think that the transfer is a gigantic experiment the result of which we can only guess at. Although we have many precedents of a peasant-proprietorship, the success of such a measure as this must depend upon the national characteristics, which in Ireland are different from any others on the earth. Since the majority has decided that the transfer should take place I think the only thing that remains is to consider what form the transfer should take. I think the Government are to be congratulated on the Bill they have brought forward, in that it is the most likely to succeed of any such Bills yet presented to the public or to Parliament. They are also to be congratulated in having obtained the financial if the somewhat unenthusiastic aid, of the British taxpayer, because without such aid no such transfer could ever have been temporarily made. The Bill, when it first made its appearance in another place obtained the qualified approval of almost everyone concerned. It obtained the approval of the taxpayer, because he was assured that it would make an end of the Irish land question—the toothache which has troubled him so long; it obtained the approval of the tenant because not only did it assure him that he would obtain the freehold of his land, and for less than he ever paid for the leasehold, but also because after a few changes it opened up an even more glorious vista of possibilities; and it obtained the approval of the landlord because it did not plunder him so much as other Land Bills have done. Our Irish landlord has had to learn by bitter experience that not only must he be grateful for small mercies, but he must be grateful if the cruelties are small also.

My Lords, there is an opinion held by most Englishmen, who can scarcely have studied the question more than superficially, that the Irish landlord is a grumbling, discontented man who has not much to grumble at, but who is better off than his British neighbour. I would remind such of the forty Land Bills of the last forty years, which have tended to impoverish the landlord and have taken away from him the right to deal with his own; which have instituted tribunals which decide what rent is to be paid to him for his farms, and in the decisions of which he has no voice whatever.

My Lords, it would be idle to go into the history of Irish land legislation because the majority of your Lordships are already acquainted with it. I think it would be better to consider the measure before you and see whether it produces those conditions without which it cannot be a workable measure, the conditions that will enable the landlords to sell and induce the tenants to buy. I think there is a general feeling throughout the United Kingdom that this Land Bill, whatever else it may do, must at least make the fortunes of the Irish landlords. I do not know what reason there is for this statement; if there is a reason I should like to hear it, because I think that, on the contrary, any landlord who sells under the conditions of this Bill must of necessity make a financial sacrifice. The bonus, of which we hear so much, will do little more than replace he amount of purchase money devoted to the expenses of sale, to the proving of title and also to providing for those employees who have lost employment thereby. Whatever the Bill may lead us to understand as to the proving of title being simplified, such is not the case. Title has to be proved as fully as ever, and at the expense of the vendor, before he can touch a penny of the money. Although the expenses of management were deducted from the landlord's income before the basis of purchase was arrived at, yet, if we may judge by a speech made by Mr. Wyndham in another place, the landlord, out of his diminished income, will have to pay for his old servants. My Lords, I mention all these things so that this Bill may not be described as the noble Lord the Earl of Dunraven said he had heard it described, as a Landlords' Relief Bill. I think, on the contrary, that every landlord who sells under it must of necessity make a pecuniary sacrifice, and I think in most cases a financial sacrifice also. It must be a matter of sentiment with most men to part with those estates which have been in their possession for generations. If the Bill passes, in order to make it a workable measure most landlords will be making the sacrifices which for the general pacification of Ireland they are willing to make.

On the appearance of the Bill in another place there were certain limits or zones which prevented any estate being sold below or above a certain figure. I cannot see what objection there could have been to these zones, because after there had been brought together the purchaser and seller they would have removed to a great extent the friction. I do not pretend that I do not think it would have been better if the zones had not been there. But since they were there the fact that they have been taken away might induce a tenant to think that the price that they enforced was too high, and since they have been removed it will lead to friction. I think there ought to be some Amendment which will provide in some way that reasons and grounds should be given for the sale of estates outside the zones. If not, in many cases the Bill will be almost inoperative. I cannot say either that they were ever unfair, because these zones made certain that a tenant should get a reduction in his rent of from 10 per cent. to 20 per cent., and perhaps give him a chance that he might receive a reduction of from 30 per cent. to 40 per cent. on his present rent, and at the same time obtain the freehold of his land. That is an excellent bargain for any tenant. We must remember that Ireland was, up to a very little while ago, not in that state which we all of us so much desire, and I think we should protect the smaller landlords against the possibility, though I hope not the probability, of any recurrence of the land war.

My Lords, there are other matters that I should like to point out in the Bill. There have been comments made in various quarters against the hole and corner policy of Dublin Castle. I think there is nothing so important for the good working of the Bill that such an accusation should not be brought against it. It is for the good of every one concerned that there should be no dealings, no policies, other than the absolutely departmental regulations in the working of this Bill, that should not be open to anybody to inquire into. The power of hearing in rent-fixing cases has also been altered, and I do not know the reason why, because the alteration of this re-hearing is as much regretted by the tenants as by the landlords. I do not know what reasons there are for the alteration of it, I have been told that the reason is on account of economy, but I can scarcely believe that to be the case. I suggest that before such alterations are made we should see how the Bill is going to act, because if the Bill does not act there will be just as many rent-fixing cases as before, and the machinery of the law will be desired for them as much as ever. I think this change, at least, should be postponed for two or three years.

There is another question on which every one feels deeply, namely, the question of planters. The planters have fought the battle of England in Ireland during the last twenty or thirty years, even at the risk of their lives, certainly at the expense of their own comfort and happiness, and at the expense of the comfort and happiness of their families. Although I have heard evicted tenants described as wounded soldiers of the war, yet I think these men, although not wounded soldiers, have been the faithful servants of the Empire through a very difficult and dangerous time, and I think, that unless they are fully protected from all pressure and annoyance, it would be a betrayal of which our posterity would be ashamed. The definition of congested estates has also been altered, and under this definition there will be nearly four times the number of estates than before, estates that are in reality in a flourishing condition. My Lords; I will not delay you longer except to point out that if this Bill passes into law in a workable form, that if it produces such conditions as will enable the landlord to sell and induce the tenant to buy his estates, I believe that the Bill will be an operative measure, and that the vast majority of estates in Ireland will be sold. I cannot be certain, and I think no one can be certain, whether such a transfer will lead towards the pacification of Ireland. I think it is a vast experiment, the result of which can only be guessed at. The chief thing I am afraid of is that it is the greatest step towards Home Rule that the country has ever seen, because I do not see how, if when the whole country is in possession of the land, they ever demand Home Rule as they are demanding it now, England will be logically able to deny it to them. I am not a Home Ruler; I am a staunch Unionist, and I think this is one of the greatest dangers of the Bill. Under the altered conditions it may be possible that Home Rule would be a blessing instead of a curse, but I think that this will not be so and pray it may never come at all. Unless the Bill passes into law in a form which does not bring forward those conditions to which I have referred so many times, instead of being a measure for the pacification of Ireland it will be the cause of greater misery than we perhaps have ever yet seen.

*THE EARL OF WESTMEATH: My Lords, it is perhaps not unnatural that almost every Irish Peer in your Lordships' House feels that it is incumbent upon him to take some part in the momentous debates which are now about to take place, and desires to do what he can to shape this important measure in the way which will be the least disastrous to his own interests. Irish Peers have before now been placed in difficult and embarrassing situations, but I venture, my Lords, to express an opinion that never since British politicians for their own ends and to suit their own purposes, and in pursuance of their own interests, embarked on that career of confiscation and spoliation which has ever since proceeded unchecked and which has brought their victims to their present most cruel and undeserved position, never before, I believe, have the representatives of Irish landlords been called upon to make up their minds upon an issue so vital and momentous to their interests. For, my Lords, the measure which we are now considering was introduced, not as anything in the nature of an emergency, not as a temporary expedient or as a half measure to tide over existing difficulties; it was heralded with a great flourish of trumpets as a Bill which was to bring about the total abolition of dual ownership—a system utterly and universally discredited—and by healing the festering sore caused by perpetual litigation and agitation, to open up an era of universal peace and prosperity, and to convert Ireland from being the cockpit of the Empire into a sort of promised land flowing with milk and honey, where all would be peace—perfect peace—and where the Dillons would cease from troubling and the O'Briens would at last be at rest. This, my Lords, was the delightful prospect opened before our eyes when that truly remarkable gathering the Irish Land Conference took place, and an admiring public was delighted at the pleasing sight of the Nationalist lion lying down amicably beside the Unionist lamb, and was further edified by the fact that the lion apparently made no attempt to growl at, much less to devour, his confiding little neighbour. I think, my Lords, the history of this conference is fairly well known, and I need not weary your Lordships with any details concerning it. It is well known that the Irish Landowners Convention and their executive committee did not feel justified in sending representatives to this conference, and it was felt that the responsibility of agreeing or disagreeing with the Nationalist Members should be left to private and irresponsible landowners. When, however, the result of the meeting was made public, our committee was not slow to recognise that the report was a valuable addition to the various suggestions which have been made for solving this thorny and intricate question, and we had no quarrel to pick with a finding which secured to us our present net incomes, less certain deductions for costs of collection and other matters.

But, my Lords, the hopes raised by this happy agreement were not destined to last very long. The Bill made its appearance, and though we cannot but recognise that it is in many respects more generous and more advantageous to us than any of its predecessors, yet it falls far short of our expectations, and as it excludes many large tenants from its operations it cannot even lay claim to that finality which was supposed to be its distinguishing feature.

On one most important point, however, the principle of a recommendation made by the Land Conference has been adopted, and certain limits were recognised above which and below which advances could not be made to the tenants to purchase their holdings. The utility of these zones—as they are commonly called—is simply incalculable, though I have found, and have been frequently surprised to find, that their significance is not as fully understood in this country as it ought to be. But alas, my Lords, the ink was hardly dry on the signatures of the members of the Land Conference, when the Nationalist members of it began to explain away their adhesion to its most important recommendations, and to assert to their anxious constituents that they had only agreed to this concession as to limitations to prevent the conference breaking up, that in reality they did not consider themselves bound by it, and that they meant nothing whatever when they gave their adhesion to these limitations. A great outcry was got up in the country by constituents of Members in the other House against the minimum price, and, with every disposition to be charitable, I fear it is not possible to refuse to recognise or misconstrue its significance. If there is any doubt on the subject, it would be removed and made clear by the following remarks, which I have extracted from a speech made by Mr. William O'Brien, which I feel perfectly justified in reading to your Lordships. He said—

> "The tenant should be absolutely free to make his own bargain and should not be obliged to pay a larger price than had been paid by purchasers in the open market during the last fifteen years under the Ashbourne Acts. The tenant should not be obliged to pay three or four years additional purchase above their 80,000 neighbours who had purchased under the Acts of 1885 and 1891."

The leading Unionist organ in Ireland comments on his speech as follows—

> "It is no good the tenant offering so low a price to his landlord that the latter will be unable to accept it. Yet Mr. O'Brien distinctly suggested that that should be their course of action. He wants the tenants to have perfect freedom of bargaining in order that they should pay the same number of years purchase, say, seventeen to twenty, that they have been in the habit of paying under the previous Purchase Acts. 'If the tenants are to be made to pay four or five years more than the present average' he says to the Government, 'you might have spared yourselves the trouble of introducing your Bill.' This, as we have said, is a distinct suggestion that if his Amendment is carried Mr. O'Brien means to use his influence (and the influence doubtless of the United Irish League exercised in the traditional fashion) to prevent the tenants from offering more than the present number of years purchase. To do this would be to defeat the object of the Bill and to render its purchase clauses a dead letter."

Now, my Lords, even assuming that the responsible leaders of the Nationalist Party should wish and mean to deal fairly with us in this matter, will they always be able to control the proceedings of small elected bodies in the far West and all over the country? They have never yet been able to do so. Will they be able to curb the ardour of the fiery young political curate? I fear that past experience forbids us to hope so, and consequently, my Lords, it will ever be a matter of most profound regret to Irish landowners that the Chief Secretary, in spite of his strong position and his great majority, should have allowed himself to be terrified by the clamour of those, who, if he had stood firm to his guns, would never have dared to wreck the Bill. He should not have been swayed by the action of individual landowners acting, not, your Lordships may be assured, in concert with responsible members of the Landowners Executive Committee, but (if report says truly) after consultation with the leaders of the Nationalist Party. I can assure your Lordships that even after a Parliamentary situation of some difficulty had been created by the unfortunate action which I have referred to, we nevertheless never ceased to press upon His Majesty's Government verbally and in writing our inability to see why these zones should be departed from. We urged that the working of the Bill largely depended upon them and that there was no reason for departing from them. Even when the situation reached an acute stage all that any responsible landlord did was to say that if the Chief Secretary must make some concession on this point they preferred one bad Amendment to another which was worse. This, my Lords, is, so far as I know, the only foundation for the extraordinary assertion so often made that this concession was pressed upon the Government by the combined representatives of both parties. I have entered in some detail into this question, my Lords, not from any desire to embarrass the Chief Secretary, for I fully recognise that he has had a difficult task, and his intentions I believe to have been good, but I cannot help thinking that his conduct of this Bill has at times been marked by such a lamentable want of pluck, that the kindest way to account for it seems to be to believe that he was under the influence of some spell cast upon him by the eyes of the dark Rosaleen, of whom we have heard something in another place. I do most earnestly beg His Majesty's Government not to take up a *non possumus* attitude in this vital matter, and not to forbid us to hope that they may consider some Amendment which will make this clause more nearly resemble its conditions before this most lamentable alteration was accepted by the Chief Secretary. I am aware that it may be difficult, if not impossible to place the matter exactly as it stood before this unfortunate alteration was made. I think there might be still some compromise on the matter, and Amendments will probably be brought forward which will enable the Government to treat us fairly in this matter.

I have more than once heard it said that there are several cases in which it would be a hardship that these zones should still apply, and I have made several attempts to discover what they are, but without success. It is, however, asserted that some estates, especially in the North, are so lowly rented that their owners ought not to lose even 10 per cent. of their incomes by selling. I wonder if it was of these estates that the Nationalist Members were thinking when they fought so hard for the abolition of the zones, and if it was anxiety for the possible losses of these poor landlords that inspired them when they denounced a principle which had been approved by the signatures of their representatives. These estates in the North of Ireland may not be so numerous as to justify the departure in this matter. One of the chief dangers which we fear is that there are an undoubtedly small number of landlords who live out of the country and independent of their property, who will rush in and sell at a low price and collar the bonus, and the landlords of neighbouring estates, if not able to sell at the same price will be placed in the same position as Lord De Freyne through the spirited action of the Congested Districts Board. Situations similar to that will be created all over Ireland for which the Government cannot escape responsibility if they do not give way over this matter. One speaker, I think it was the noble Duke the Duke of Abercorn, assured the House that none of the Amendments would be of a controversial character. I heard him with some surprise. I hope he has some assurance that the Amendments we are going to move, and of which he is well aware, will all be accepted by the Government with the cheerfulness he apparently contemplates. We are, indeed, glad to hear that there is no danger of opposition. The questions of the minimum price, the protection of planters, sporting rights, minerals, the rules of procedure in rent fixing, and other most important matters are not at present in an entirely satisfactory state, and I would remind your Lordships that, owing to the smallness of our representation in another place, it is really only in your Lordships' House that we have an opportunity of putting forward our views on these vital points, and I regret very much that the shortness of the time at our disposal may prevent their receiving the full attention which they ought to receive both here and in another place. There is one clause so ridiculous that I do not think there is a single Member of the Government in this House who will have the face to get up and defend it when we move its rejection.

In conclusion, my Lords, I wish to express a hope that in discussing as we desire to discuss and to a certain extent, if possible, to amend this measure, we shall not be suspected of any wish to obstruct the Government in their anxiety to pass it into law, or to place any needless difficulties in their path. Landowners as a body have become fully converted, my Lords, to the necessity of land purchase, and have more than once officially declared this fact in public. We have not done so from any belief that its adoption will bring about any remarkable change for the better in the condition of the country or because we desire to surrender the properties which we have held in many cases for centuries. We have done so because, since the abolition of dual ownership was adopted by the Government, our position has become every day more unsatisfactory, dangerous and untenable. We are now only limited rent chargers on the properties we once absolutely owned, and that small rent-charge is diminishing so rapidly that in many cases it has almost reached a vanishing point. Irish landlords have realised the force of these circumstances, and have resolved to fall in with the policy of the Government, but we ask, and I do not see how any thinking man can deny the justice of our claims, that this great change should be carried out without any further loss to us who have already lost so much, and that we should receive at least as much justice as the publican or the landowners whose property is taken in this country for military or other public purposes. His Majesty's Government have now an opportunity of carrying out for good and all the policy upon which, whether for good or evil they have embarked, and once more I beg of them not to play fast and loose with the interests of the weaker and the losing party, but to give a sympathetic and careful consideration to the Amendments which we shall bring forward in Committee.

*VISCOUNT HAMPDEN: My Lords, I hardly like to strike a discordant note in the harmonious proceedings of this evening. We have heard a great deal of the interests of the Irish landowner; we have heard also of the interests of the Irish occupier, and I wish to say a few words in the interests of the British taxpayer. The noble Duke, when he addressed the House in the early part of the evening, referred to the cash and credit of the taxpayers of the United Kingdom. It is exactly their cash and credit which is to carry this Bill into operation. When he went on to say what advantages the Irish tenant and the landlord were to get I wondered who was to pay for those advantages. I myself, as an individual taxpayer, would not grudge to pay even a larger sum if the Bill were to result, as the noble Duke the Leader of the House said, in peace in Ireland; that is to say, there will be no further agitation on the land question and the landowners and tenants will remain in agreement. If that were so, then I would not grudge myself, and I do not believe any taxpayer in the United Kingdom would grudge, the money to be spent. But I do not believe anything of the kind will happen. The noble Lord the Earl of Crewe in his speech just now referred to the question whether Irish landowners would sell their lands, and, indeed, whether Irish tenants would purchase, as to which I shall have something to say presently. He asked what would happen if some Irish landlords sell and others do not. Of course, we know very well what will happen. The Bill is an optional Bill, but compulsory in its result, and what would happen would be this, that you would have De Freyne and Dillon estates all over Ireland and a fiercer agitation than ever before, until the whole of the landlords were got rid of as a curse and nuisance to the country. I am sorry to express this discordant voice in the harmony which is prevailing this evening, but I believe that will happen, and, what is more, I believe the Government themselves anticipate that it will occur. The noble Lord the Earl of Dunraven, who knows more about this question and has studied it perhaps more than anyone else, gave us his opinion of the present land tenant system in Ireland. He said it was abominable, and hardly to be borne; that it was necessary to get rid of it; that it was the ruin of the Irish landlords, and was the demoralisation of the Irish tenant. With all that I entirely agree. But the noble Lord went on to say that this Bill is going to get rid of this system. I would ask the noble Lord how he supposes that this Bill is going to do it.

This Bill is only an optional Bill. It will take years to come into operation. It is doubtful if the landlords, or many of them, will sell, and it is extremely doubtful if the tenant will buy. My contention will be this, that really the tenants under the Land Act of 1881 are in a better position than any tenant in the whole world, and I do not suppose the tenants under the Land Act of 1881 will really be in any better position, as regards the future at any rate, than the tenants under this Act, because the tenants under this Act will get a great advantage in the immediate reduction of their rents, and they will be finally at a risk of a fall in prices. They have now got their landlords behind them, but if they mean to keep their bargain with the State then the tenants under the Act of 1881 will be in a far better position as regards the future than the tenants under this Act. I know it requires a great deal of courage to espouse a very unpopular cause. It takes even greater courage to plead in this House for principles in legislation of sound economy, of justice, and even of morality. Perhaps these ought to have been the care of His Majesty's Government, but apparently, so far as Irish legislation is concerned, they are not so. It appears that everybody approves of this Bill. There was a consensus of opinion in the other House, with few exceptions, in favour of this Bill. I understand the noble Lords on the Front Bench (indicating the Opposition Front Bench) are supporters of this Bill, and yet I feel it my duty to enter a protest against this Bill as one which is thoroughly mischievous and corrupt, and the result of which will be a land war and an agitation more fierce and more embittered than any that has preceded it. These are strong words, my Lords, but I believe I shall be able to prove the truth of them. The owners of land in Ireland have a fair claim to compensation. I think they have. I think they have a fair claim to compensation, not because of their reduction of rent, because we in England have suffered equal reductions of rent, if not larger in some cases.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (The Marquess of LONDONDERRY): Not compulsory reduction.

*VISCOUNT HAMPDEN: I have some land in which I had 60 per cent. reduction.

THE MARQUESS OF LONDONDERRY: Not compulsory.

*VISCOUNT HAMPDEN: Well, but the same result has arrived from natural causes, and probably the same causes would affect you. However, I pass by all that I say, as a matter of fact, that the reduction has been larger, at any rate as much in England as in Ireland. I was merely saying that the landlords of Ireland have a claim to compensation, not because of reduction of rent but because a certain property was transferred from them to the tenants on their land. Mr. Gladstone himself speaking on this matter said, that if in the course of years it was shown that the result of his Land Acts would be a certain discoverable loss of capital to the owner that then it would be the duty of the State to meet that loss, to meet it boldly and to face it. That is why I complain of the action of His Majesty's Government. I think they knew very well that there has been this loss on the part of the Irish landowner; but instead of meeting it face to face and dealing with it they have given the owner a bonus of £12,000,000, probably on the ground that they had dealt favourably with the tenant. It is impossible to deal with this question without referring to previous legislation. I do not want to carry the House far back in this matter, and will only go as far back as Mr. Gladstone's Land Act of 1870. That gave compensation to the Irish tenants for improvements. Shortly afterwards, in his next administration, Mr. Gladstone carried the Land Act of 1881, which might very well be called the charter of the Irish tenant. It was almost, indeed, a revolutionary measure so far as regards land tenure. It gave the tenant these advantages, firstly, leases renewable for ever at short periods of time, secondly, rents settled not by contracts but by State tribunals, and thirdly, the right to sell their interest. Along with some others who sat behind the Government Benches at that time and who took an interest in this question I endeavoured to modify the operation of that Bill by limiting its effect so far as we could to the then present tenants of Ireland, because we felt that if an unrestricted right was given to the growth of tenant right that the position of future tenants would be absolutely intolerable, and that their burdens would be too heavy for them to bear and to carry on their farming operations successfully.

I have a particular instance in my hands which noble Lords having knowledge of Irish land will confirm. In February, 1903, a farm was sold by public auction near Killarney containing twenty-seven acres, the judicial rent being £8. The purchaser gave £400 for the tenant's interest; thus at 5 per cent. the purchaser reckoned the rent at £28 instead of £8, the amount of the judicial rent. Although we had the support of the Party opposite at that time we were unsuccessful in getting any amendment to this Bill and Mr. Gladstone practically carried these clauses of the Land Act of 1881 as he had drafted them. The final effect was that the owner in Ireland was turned into a rent charger or rent receiver without any interest in his estate, having really no object in spending another shilling upon it, and the tenant was turned into an owner, with the result that a certain interest was transferred from the landowner to the tenant. That being the case, and looking at the condition of the Irish tenants as compared with any other tenant in any other part of Europe, I want to know why was it necessary for the Government to deal with this question at all? The tenant under the Act of 1881 was, after all, in a position superior to that held by any occupying tenant in the world, and surely he might be left alone to enjoy his advantages. As I said before, the owner-tenant under that Act is not subject to fluctuations of prices, but the tenant under this Bill if he means to keep his bargain with the State will be subject to that risk. If it were absolutely necessary to abolish the system of dual ownership—and I do not think that that necessity can be established—why did not the Government take the more direct course, the simpler course, one which would not involve any risk to the State, or any necessity for a large loan. Taking the owners as having been created rent chargers by the Act of 1881, why could not the State have turned them into perpetual annuitants at their present rents, or at rents fixed subsequently to the Act of 1896. What would that have meant? It would have meant no necessity to raise a loan, and no risk to the taxpayer whatever. But here is just where the comedy of this situation comes in. The representatives of the tenants say they have always paid and always will pay under the Purchase Acts. Upon that matter I shall have to say a few words presently. But, assuming that to be true, why should they not accept that solution? The reason is obvious. They will not accept that solution because prices may fall and the rent-charge will be too high. So that the risk which the tenant will not take, the risk which the owner will not take, is to be thrown upon the British taxpayer. I said the risk was a serious risk. I notice what was stated by the noble Lord, the Earl of Dunraven, and the Leader of the House, who stated as a defence of the Bill that annuities had always been paid under the Ashbourne Act, and under the several Acts dealing with land purchase in Ireland.

I have looked into this matter and read up the evidence given before the Fry Commission, and I must say that I think the evidence shows directly to the contrary. It shows clearly that there is an appreciable risk to the British taxpayer and that things are not quite so bright as they have been stated. Mr. Commissioner O'Brien, one of the chiefs of the Irish Land Commission, in giving evidence before the Fry Commission in Dublin on October 7th, 1897, stated that:—

> "Of about 2,500 of that time the collection of the instalments in no less that 1,600 or 1,700 cases was then in the hands of the solicitors."

and he also put in a list of sale for default on different holdings for the previous ten or eleven years showing by the sums realised at sheriff's sales that the advances made by the State, through the Land Commissioners, had gone very near the margin of security, even under the present system of State inspection of every holding, and that in some cases nothing was got, and there were some holdings on hand. I would like to ask the noble Lord who represents the Irish Office in this House, what was the number of Civil Bill Processes for arrears for May, 1905, instalments issued against tenant purchasers at the October, 1902, Session at Moville, in the county of Londonderry. I am informed that they number several hundreds.

I yield to no one in my admiration for the ability of the Irish Secretary, for the admirable skill with which he has conducted this Bill through the House of Commons, but I say this, that no amount of skill and no amount of oratory can remove the taint of corruption from this Bill, nor can it prsvent the Bill resulting, as I believe it will result, in a land war, or in an agitation of even a fiercer kind than anything that has preceded it. The Bill is an optional Bill. The Government say that. It is optional in name, but not really in fact. The Government have evaded the responsibility of bringing in a compulsory Bill, but by this Bill they have made compulsion absolutely inevitable. It is true that the Bill is optional in the sense that a landlord need not sell. It is not necessary that they should sell. It is not compulsory on them that they should sell, but some of them will sell, and then you will have the whole business over again of the Dillon and De Freyne estates, for you will have the owner tenants side by side with the other tenants, comparing favourably with them as regards their rent. I do not see that they compare favourably in regard to the future, because there will be a risk of falling prices. The result will be another land war, another agitation, another Government making concessions, and, finally, another Bill brought into this House and your Lordships asked to pass it, dealing with the landlords as a nuisance altogether. And this is a Bill which we are asked to pass in order to bring peace to Ireland. I wish it were even possible to believe so. I do not believe it to be possible. Mr. Bright has often been quoted on this question, and, no doubt, he was in favour to a certain extent of the purchase by tenants of the land from their landlords. But this Bill, as I have endeavoured to prove, will end in compulsion, and must end in compulsion. Mr. Bright's views were not in favour of compulsory purchase. He wrote a letter on November 14th 1887, to Lord Kilmorey, which I hope your

Lordships will allow me to quote, because I think it is full of wisdom. He said :—

> The idea of buying up or buying out the proprietary class seems to me monstrous, unnecessary, and unjust. There are hundreds, many hundreds, of proprietors in Ireland who do not wish to be bought out. They would prefer to retain possession of their ancestral mansions and estates, and have no wish to seek homes in Great Britain or elsewhere. For Parliament to insist on compulsory sale would be to gratify the disloyal leaders in Ireland. They wish to get rid of the proprietary class, and then they say, and perhaps they believe, they could unite the whole of Ireland in hostility to England. To get rid of the proprietors will be to establish a wholesale system of absenteeism, and to make the Chancellor of the Exchequer the great receiver of the rents from the great All-Ireland Absentee Estate. Is it possible that any sane statesman will consent to such a scheme, or offer to Parliament and the country so wild a policy as that involved in this? I have no affection for the system of landlordism as it has presented itself in too many cases in Ireland. I have condemned it and urged its reform in speeches in Parliament and on public platforms, in England and in Ireland, so far back as 30 years ago. I have said there could be no security for landed property in Ireland until land as a property was made free of sale and purchase by a radical change in our laws affecting its sale and purchase and tenure. I have suggested means by which this great reform might be effected, but I have never held the opinion that Government should step in and banish the landlords and make all tenants into owners, if not at the cost, yet at the risk, of the Imperial Exchequer.

If the result of this Bill is to be what the noble Duke the Leader of the House said, a successful, a free and an unencumbered peasantry in Ireland, I would join the noble Duke in the lobby if there is to be a Division, but I suppose that a Division is not to be hoped for. But does the noble Duke, and does His Majesty's Government, believe that it is possible to have a free and unencumbered peasantry in Ireland? As the Bill originally stood there was a clause which imposed a rent-charge. That was certainly more of a safeguard against the mortgaging of these lands, but that has been thrown aside in response to the Irish vote in the other House. What is left? There is actually in the Bill a clause empowering Irish tenants to mortgage their estates up to ten times the value of the instalments. What will happen? What has happened before? The Irish tenant has to deal with his family, and he has nothing but the land. He will mortgage his land and his general credit will do the rest, and then you will have the old vicious circle again, you will have got rid of the owners but you cannot get rid of ownership, and you will only have changed one set of owners for another and a worse set of owners. On the whole, looking at all these difficulties, and knowing the noble Duke will sympathise with me in that respect, because he was a member of Mr. Gladstone's Government in 1870 and in 1880—knowing all these difficulties and the trouble there has been in connection with Irish land I should have thought that His Majesty's Government would have left the Irish tenant alone. Apart from the question of the position of the Irish landlord the Irish tenant is in a position better than that of any tenant in the world, and, at any rate he can compare favourably with the tenant under your Act. I really doubt whether he will be satisfied, because although he will get a reduction of rent he now has his landlord at the back of him and will not be at the risk of any fall in the price in the market, whereas the tenant under this Act will be at the risk of a falling price if he means to keep his bargain with the State.

I will give one further reason. The landowners of Ireland, at any rate, have been a buffer between the State and the tenants of Ireland, but under this Act, if it is to be successful, if it is to operate and there is a desire of the whole of the tenantry to come into it, there will be a further and compulsory Bill establishing Land Purchase in Ireland. Then you will have the Chancellor of the Exchequer brought into direct connection with the tenants of Ireland, he will be the collector of rents in the great All-Ireland Absentee Estate. The position might become so absolutely intolerable that finally some other Government will come in and hand over to the Irish County Councils the duty of collecting the rents of Ireland and of administering the funds, and so the Government opposite, which was brought in to protect the Union in Ireland, will have sacrificed it, they will have given up the outworks, they will have surrendered the garrison, they will have made the capture of the citadel inevitable, and I believe the result of this Bill will be, and that the record of the Government will be, that they have betrayed the principal trust which was committed to their charge.

LORD INCHIQUIN: My Lords, I wish to call attention to one matter in which I think the Government have missed an opportunity, namely, that of allowing the landlords the power of rounding off their demesne lands. We are now asked to part with our properties entirely. In previous cases we have let our properties, in the first instance before the Land Acts. Then the Land Acts have been introduced and have taken away one by one our rights, and now we are asked to part with our properties entirely, and no provision is made for the rounding off of our estates. They spoil our sporting rights. The Government have lost an opportunity of assisting us, but I propose to bring in an Amendment on this subject, because I think it is a point which will induce landlords to remain in the country if they are allowed to buy up from the tenants a part or the whole of the tenancies.

THE MARQUESS OF LONDONDERRY: I think your Lordships will agree that the discussions and debate which have taken place to-night have been of considerable interest. I think also you will agree that with one or two exceptions, there seems to be a very general consensus of opinion that the Government have acted wisely in introducing a Bill to your Lordships' House which is, at any rate, an endeavour to attempt some solution of the great Irish problem. I address you to-night as a member of His Majesty's Government, responsible to some extent for that measure, and I venture to trespass upon your attention, more especially on the attention of noble Lords from Ireland with whom I have served so long and hope to serve for an equally long period. I wish to speak as one especially interested in Ireland, who resides in Ireland, who hopes to reside in Ireland, and who has the warmest place at the bottom of his heart for the good of the country, and I say that this measure which His Majesty's Government are introducing is for the benefit and welfare of all classes of the community in Ireland. My Lords, I think you will agree with me that the speech delivered by my noble friend the Earl of Dunraven was one of enormous interest, showing a great grasp of the question, and an experience derived not only from living in Ireland, but from presiding over the Land Conference, and as such, it was of the greatest help and instruction to us. The noble Lord proved to us beyond all doubt, in the words of his own Report, that the present agrarian situation in Ireland is intolerable. He proved to us beyond all doubt that both owners and occupiers of land are dissatisfied with the results of the operation of the Land Act of 1881. That was one of the most important items contained in the Report of the Conference.

I am not going to complain of the Act of 1881. I need not say that, as a Conservative Member in Ireland at the time, I was opposed to the 1881 Act, and, so far as I could gather from the speeches that have been delivered, not only in this place but also in the other House, there is a consensus of opinion among both sections, the Opposition and the Government, that the Act of 1881 has not realised the opinions and views that were held out, but has proved not only injurious but disastrous to the interests of the land question in Ireland. At the present moment the proof of that is very evident. If we listen to the opinion of owners of property who have spoken here we learn that they were dissatisfied. If we listen to the representatives of the tenants we hear that they are dissatisfied with the Bill of 1881, and, consequently, I venture to say that there is a general consensus of opinion that with regard to the working of the Act of 1881 it is giving dissatisfaction to owners and occupiers alike, and must be considered of a most unsatisfactory character. I ask your Lordships who are landowners to put yourselves in the position of an owner of land in Ireland. What is his position under the administration of the Act of 1881? He may perhaps see land which belonged to him before 1881, and from which, if it were his own now, he could derive a substantial income, allowed to deteriorate, or at any rate not done the fullest justice to. Seeing this, he knows full well that at the expiration of a certain time, when a reduction of rents will take place, owing to the deterioration of the land he is absolutely certain to have his income reduced. In these circumstances undoubtedly any owner of the land would feel himself aggrieved. Anyone would, and therefore he is dissatisfied with the Land Act of 1881. Then, again, the occupier of the land is dissatisfied. I sympathise with him, because he is naturally dissatisfied, and because he knows that if he improves his land and does full justice to it, when the time for his reduction of rent comes round the Commissioner will raise his rent. What is the result of that? That the owner and occupiers, who are equally interested in the land, and ought to be the richer by it, are both the poorer by it; and in addition to that they have enormous legal expenses to pay, all due to the Act of 1881. It not only makes them poorer but antagonistic, and it creates a friction which would not otherwise exist.

What has been the only alternative? One which I have myself for many years advocated—viz., to establish the principle of enabling the occupier, by a system of voluntary sale and voluntary purchase, to become the owner of his land on terms agreeable to himself, agreeable to the owner and with no appreciable risk to the State. I do not wish to deal with this matter from a personal point of view, but I have given practical proof of my adherence to this principle because I myself have sold almost the whole of my landed property to my tenants within the last fifteen or sixteen years, and have done so with the most admirable results. This scheme which has been submitted to your Lordships by the noble Duke in a speech so clear and so explicit that I do not think I need trespass at any length upon your time in dealing with it, goes far to realise that scheme which I have propounded. At the same time the noble Lord opposite, the Earl of Crewe, raised a very pregnant, and to my mind practical, argument as to whether or not the landlords will sell. Well, the question of the owner's willingness to sell to my mind rests to a great extent on what terms the owner can get. It has been generally said by noble Lords to-day that during the past twenty years the owners of property in Ireland have suffered enormous reductions. That is not to be contradicted. The noble Lord Viscount Hampden alluded to the fact that English landowners had suffered a proportionate decrease in their rents. I ventured to say that that decrease was not compulsory, but that the English landlords had made voluntary concessions to tenants or that they could have taken the land into their own hands. I have always maintained that the condition of agriculture in Ireland has not been so depressed in certain parts as in England. I know the noble Lord has experience in the eastern counties and that he will say there has been a considerable depreciation of land owing to agricultural depression. The noble Lord who owns land in Cheshire will know that in the great grazing counties they have not suffered from depression. What is the position of the Irish landowner at the present moment? He cannot afford to sell unless he has reserved for him at any rate the greater part of that income which has been so reduced during the past years, and which in many cases leaves him so small a margin, but if it is taken away from him he will eventually find himself, as I think the noble Lord the Earl of Dunraven has said, in the workhouse.

To my mind the Chief Secretary, whose praise I am so glad to hear sung by your Lordships to-night, has propounded a scheme which, whether you agree with it or not, goes far to solve that problem. The proposal of the Government is that it is necessary that the State should intervene and advance a sum of money in order to bridge over that gap which would prevent the landowner being in a position to sell, and the tenant being in a position to give the sum of money which the landlord could afford to take. I particularly want to deal with a certain part of the subject alluded to by the noble Lord the Earl of Crewe and the noble Lord Viscount Hampden. I think that both of them laid stress, especially Viscount Hampden, on the fact that the Imperial Exchequer was running a considerable risk in advancing a large sum of money in order to bridge over this gulf, and thus make the situation possible both for the landowner and for the tenant. To my mind there is no risk whatever to the Imperial Exchequer. I think the securities that I can show, and which I think are understood by those who have thoroughly studied the question, are so apparent and real that there is no risk whatever to the Imperial Exchequer in advancing the sum of money for this purpose. The first security that the Imperial Exchequer has is on the holding of the tenant. But it not only has the security of the holding of the tenant, but it has the additional security in the fact that the Imperial Exchequer possesses the tenant-right *plus* the whole of the interest. I know a good many cases, and the noble Lords from Ireland will know of a great many cases, in which the tenant's interest is far larger than the landowner's, and has fetched far more than that given for the fee-simple. But there is a second security. That is the annual Imperial grants in aid of local taxation which are already given to Ireland exactly as they are given to England. These Imperial grants amount altogether, I think, to no less than £3,000,000 per annum, out of which guarantee fund, by Section 35, Subsection 4, you will see that the amount in arrear will be charged on or made good out of. I may say that £3,000,000 a year, which is practically 3 per cent. on the amount of money you are prepared to advance, independent of the bonus, is sufficient to be an absolute security for the proposed sum even in the event of a general strike against the payment of instalments. The noble Lord has laid some stress on the question of a general strike. I venture to say that the fear of a general strike is absolutely groundless.

The noble Lord, Earl Spencer, has had experience of Ireland, and so have other noble Lords opposite, and I do not think they will contradict me when I say that there has never been a general strike against rent in Ireland as a whole. I am not going to deny that there has been an attempt at a general strike. The noble Lord knows well that there was a no-rent manifesto in the year 1881, but he also knows full well that the no-rent manifesto was supported by the strongest Nationalist Party, led by the strongest Nationalist Leader the Party has ever known, Mr. Parnell, then in the height of his power; he also knows well that the strike against rent was made against the old rent, and not against the rents settled in Court, and he knows that it was not taken up, and that it was in fact a failure. We have seen local strikes against rents—strikes under the system of the Plan of Campaign. We have seen strikes against rents on the De Freyne estate, but I venture to say that no one will contradict me when I say that these strikes have been absolute failures. I maintain, as the noble Lord the Earl of Dunraven maintained, that it is impossible that there should be a general combination against the payment of these instalments for the very reason that no two purchasers in any of the cases, past or present, have equivalent interests. The noble Lord said that some had paid bigger instalments than others for their tenant-rights. Some have been paying for a great many years past, and some are only going to begin to pay. It is impossible to believe that one man who has a great stake in his holding is likely to combine with men who may be liable to agitation, but who have only had a holding for a short time, and who invite him to join in a general strike against rent. That is my answer to the noble Lord opposite with regard to any question of repudiation of the instalments, and what he has called the future land war in Ireland. I think the noble Lord in the speech he made prognosticating a general strike against instalments has done but small credit to the honesty of the Irish tenant.

VISCOUNT HAMPDEN: I did nothing of the kind. I said the result of this Act would be that when tenants found that they were not comparing favourably with others there would be an agitation in the Press and in the whole of Ireland which would lead to a compulsory Act.

THE MARQUESS OF LONDONDERRY: I cannot follow the noble Lord. I think the experience of the past eighteen years, since the Ashbourne Act was introduced, will prove the honesty of the Irish tenant in paying the instalments. I myself have absolute confidence in the honesty of the Irish tenant, and I can point to the punctuality with which the instalments have been paid in the past. My Lords, I dislike troubling you with statistics, but I will quote from our experience since 1885, when you will remember that the Ashbourne Act was introduced and passed, which Act has been taken advantage of by upwards of 80,000 tenants, who are now owners of holdings of which they were previously tenants. How have these instalments been paid? The advances since 1885 for land purchase exceed £22,250,000, and the payment of the purchase instalments has been most regular. Instalments due to the half-year ending November, 1902, amount to close on £430,000, all of which, with the exception of £2,800, were paid by June last, and that is not much more than a half per cent. in arrear. I do not know what the noble Earl's experience is as a landlord, but if I received my rents with as much punctuality I should consider myself an exceedingly fortunate man. With that to guide me I cannot allow that there is any great risk of tenants in the future refusing to pay with the same punctuality as in the past. Even if there were a risk of the Imperial Exchequer having to pay a certain amount of money, I maintain that it would be only justice to Ireland that it should undertake that risk. My Lords, it is but tardy justice to the interests of Ireland. You who have studied the Irish question are probably fully aware that if it had not been for the action of the Imperial Parliament you could not, to my mind, be asked to accept the responsibility for the agrarian difficulties brought upon Ireland by the Act of 1881, but in that unsuccessful attempt to remedy this matter Parliament was following merely the example of past Parliaments. I would recall that Ireland in the past has grievously suffered at the hands of the Imperial Parliament. There was a time in which the Imperial Parliament crushed out the great manufacturing industries in Ireland in order to benefit England. What was the opinion on the matter of Lord John Russell? I was reading only a short time ago the recollections of Earl Russell, and I came across this paragraph which struck me so forcibly that I wish to quote it to your Lordships. He said:—

> "The soil of Ireland is especially adapted to the feeding of sheep; the price of fleece-wool in Ireland in 1733 was 5d., of combed wool 12d. per pound. In France Irish fleece-wool was sold for 2s. 6d. per pound; combed wool from 4s. 6d. to 6s. It is obvious that if the Irish had been allowed to export their fleece and combed wool to France they would have made an enormous profit by their pastoral industry, and the anarchical spirit would have been vanquished. What stood in the way of these benefits?—benefits for Ireland, benefits for England, benefits for the Empire.........The English Parliament.........in a spirit of detraction and selfishness resolved to build on a property of Ireland the supremacy of English law and English administration."

I also read with interest some remarks of Mr. Lecky, whom your Lordships know so well. What does he say with regard to this matter:—

> "The commercial policy of England was grossly selfish and ruinous to Irish interests. Its effects in Ireland were peculiarly disastrous, it not only aggravated the deplorable poverty of the country, but it had a permanent influence of a most far-reaching kind. It broke down the industrial spirit which it should have been the first object of England to support. It tended to throw the whole population for subsistence on the soil, and thus gave agrarian disturbances the peculiarly bitter and persistent character they have ever assumed."

The Marquess of Londonderry.

My Lords, I have merely quoted these words to show that if your Lordships should permit the Imperial Exchequer and the country to take any risk in order to remove Irish grievances, you are only doing ordinary justice to Ireland. I venture to say that the statistics with regard to the regularity of the payments of instalments show that there has been no permanent loss to this country. On the contrary, I hope I have shown that the money advanced for the purpose of enabling occupiers to become owners of their land in Ireland has not only been paid with regularity but has been associated with very satisfactory results. What is the condition of purchasers in Ireland, not only from a financial point of view, but from a social point of view? You know that Mr. Bailey, who will be appointed if you pass this Bill, has recently issued a report on the condition of the tenant purchasers. In that report he says:—

> "The result has been eminently satisfactory. It has introduced above all things a spirit of contentment among the people. . . The fertility of the land has been increased. . . . The general solvency of purchasers has been improved. . . . The political unrest which frequently prevailed among occupiers before they came purchasers has become quite quiescent and their intellectual activities are now mainly turned to the improvement of their material circumstances."

I venture to say, my Lords, that if you sanction the advance of this money to them you will receive your interest paid with punctuality, and achieve the satisfactory results mentioned by Mr. Bailey, and that the system of voluntary sale and purchase of land in Ireland will be an absolute success. These happy results will undoubtedly have been achieved by two things. By sacrifice on the part of that body of men to whom you have listened to-night, the Irish landowners. The Irish landowners have suffered great deprivations in the past, and in accepting the Bill which you are now asked to pass they will undoubtedly suffer in their feelings. I maintain no one can view an Irish landowner selling his land with anything but feelings of sympathy. The landowners will, as the noble Lord, the Earl of Dunraven said with great truth, feel the parting with land which has been in the possession of their ancestors for generations. My Lords, I am one of those singularly tenacious persons. I am singularly tenacious to the land in which I was born and bred, and I do feel this, that the landowners should not, under this measure, be expatriated. I believe that there is a general consensus of opinion on the part of all classes of the community to retain the landowners in the country in which they were born, in which they have lived, and in which they have done so much good work. 1 believe there is good work yet to be done, and when the friction of the question of raising or lowering of rent is removed, they will find themselves not only welcomed but placed in positions of honour amongst those with whom they dwell.

My Lords, may I be allowed to say a few words of a personal character? I have parted with most of my property, but there has ever been between myself and my predecessors, most kindly and affectionate relations with the tenants, and since I have parted with my property those feelings have in no way relaxed, for in the past three or four years there have been three cases in which my tenants have vied with one another in doing honour to members of my family by making them the recipients of valuable and costly presents. I believe that the landowners will find their tenants as true to them. My Lords, I do not for one moment prognosticate that this Bill will be the finality of the Irish question. I have had thirty years experience of Irish questions and politics, and the man is not alive who can declare that he will settle the Irish question. I think my right hon. friend, Mr. Wyndham, in the Bill which he has introduced, has made an enormous step, the biggest step I have ever seen, and probably the biggest step I shall ever see, towards the finality of that great Irish problem. If both classes carry it out under the auspicious circumstances in which we see the landlords and tenants acting in concert, I believe that we shall find that the Administration of the future will declare that this Government grappled with the problem, which at one time appeared insoluble, with great courage. They rely on the loyalty and combination of the two classes of the community in Ireland to prove that there is life in the old land yet.

*LORD CLONBROCK: My Lords, almost everything that I could say with regard to this measure has been said by the noble Lord who preceded me. Before, however, entering upon the consideration of it, I wish to express my full appreciation of the sincere wish which animated the Government in introducing this Bill for the welfare of my country. I also wish to express my appreciation of the ability with which that Bill has been framed and the liberality of its financial provisions. But for the very reason that I give full credit to the framers of the Bill I must express my great regret that it is not presented to you in the shape in which it was originally introduced into the other House. I know that this regret is shared by others having greater knowledge and experience, especially by people in the West of Ireland, from which I have only just come. It is in the interests of the Bill itself that I wish to speak. We fear that in its present shape it is not likely to be such an efficiently working measure as it was in its original shape. I allude chiefly to the relaxation of what are called the "zones." The provisions in the original Bill as to the zones one would have thought were liberal enough. They have been so fully explained that I need not go into details. It suffices to say that under the provisions of the section containing the zones the purchaser whose rent was £100 by paying a terminable annuity of £70 could obtain possession of his farm. One might call this almost an extreme case, for it is in the essence of every bargain that no agreement can come to a successful issue unless the terms are acceptable to both parties, and if they are very favourable to one, they are not quite so likely to commend themselves to the other party. In this particular case the capital sum represented by the £70 would, when paid to the vendor with the additional grant made from the bonus, be only sufficient, in the case of settled property, to produce an income of about £75 a year instead of £100. That is a loss of about 25 per cent. If invested at 3 per cent. it would produce £72, if at $3\frac{1}{4}$, £78. Anyone who has no other resources than landed property can hardly be expected to accept these terms. Now that the zones have been relaxed it is to be feared that the tenant purchasers will expect still more favourable terms, and when they find they are able to get them, we fear that discontent will arise and probably agitation. There are already rumours in the air. We seem to hear ominous sounds like the distant rumbling of a coming storm. We are told on the highest authority that if the demands of the tenants are not acceded to in the smallest particular the land war will be renewed with even greater acrimony than we have experienced in the past. Those, especially from my part of the country, remember well the former war in a not very distant past, and are very naturally apprehensive that the result of this relaxation and arousing of false hopes may lead to most serious consequences. For my own part I should have been content if there had been no zones in the Bill, because there is a certain element of danger in a maximum, which was pointed out on a very different subject the other day when this House was discussing the speed of motor-cars. It was then pointed out that the result would be that the maximum would immediately be taken as a minimum. It is much worse when a maximum has been introduced and is then relaxed.

With regard to the bargains outside the zones, we are told by the noble Duke that these would only occur in exceptional cases, but these exceptions have never been clearly defined and specified. The danger still remains unless clear definitions are given. My Lords, as to the attitude of the landlords in general in regard to this Bill I believe that most landlords are ready and many of them are anxious to sell, but that is on the condition that they are secured from grave financial loss. But the disposition and inclination of the landlords to sell will differ in almost every case. One may take it at one end of the scale. A man who has suffered severely from the administration of the Land Act, who has had trouble of all sorts with his tenants, who has no particular affection or attachment to his place or the country, might be glad to escape from his position on almost any terms. We may take another man who never had any trouble with his tenants, who has always maintained the most amicable relations with them, who is bound to them by strong personal and hereditary ties, and who would reluctantly see the connection severed. The inducement to sell in the latter case must be far greater than in the former. It has been urged outside this House that the landlords are to be guided in the price they ask by the sales that have already taken place in what is called the open market. The noble Lord the Earl of Dunraven showed clearly that an open market for rent did not exist now. He said that was based on the agitated state of the country; but one may go further, and say that ever since the Act of 1881 there has been no open market, but that the tenants on any property have had an entire monopoly. For no one else in his senses would buy a rood of Irish land. Apart from this, the market price was put at some eighteen years' purchase. That depends upon what is sometimes called the fallacious doctrine of averages, for one property may have been sold for twenty-four years' purchase and another for twelve. The noble Lord the Earl of Crewe, gave instances in which there was a difference of forty-two and ten years.

THE EARL OF CREWE: Forty-five and six years.

*LORD CLONBROCK: Taking my figures between twenty-four and twelve, that gives an average of eighteen years; but it cannot be contended that that is a fair rule which can be applied to any particular property. That property may be far more like the one sold at twenty-four years purchase than at any other price. Again, as was pointed out by Mr. Wyndham, land property sold at low prices for various reasons. Some landlords were forced into the market by creditors or mortgagees, others have sold estates in one part of the country to pay off encumbrances on those in another, which amounts to an investment of the purchase money at 4½ or 5 per cent.; and again, some estates were sold when land stocks stood at 112 or higher. The price must depend upon the circumstances of every property. I feel convinced of the sympathy of the Government for Irish landlords of which we have been often assured in this House. I believe that this Bill was introduced partly in the hope of extricating them from a very precarious position. I must not omit to acknowledge one provision distinctly in their favour which admits of their selling and repurchasing demesne lands. I believe that the Government are also prepared to deal fairly with us in regard to sporting rights. I hope these provisions may result in the present owners of property continuing to reside in Ireland. It is most desirable that they should do so, for the withdrawal from any community of a large number of men of education and culture would be a grave calamity. I must observe that there is no moral obligation on the landlord to sell. It is often said outside the House that the landlord is bound to sell, but the Bill was introduced to obviate and get rid of the present system of administration of the land law in Ireland. The landlords are in no way bound to sell. They are not responsible for the state of confusion and anxiety and unrest created by the Act of 1881 and by the administration of that Act. I was glad to hear that as severely spoken of by the noble Duke as I have ever heard it spoken of in Ireland. But if the Government of 1881 were deficient in foresight, there is no reason why Irish landlords should bear the penalty and be made to play the part of the whipping boy of that Government. They have suffered severely already by that Act, and now it is urged that they are bound to sacrifice the remnants of their property. I have said the Bill was introduced as a sort of substitute for the present administration of land law in Ireland, but the misfortune is that it is not a substitute because the two systems have to go on working alongside one another. However well this Act works it is absolutely impossible that the purchases can be thoroughly finished for a considerable number of years, and during that time the same state of demoralisation on the part of the tenants, and anxiety and uncertainty on the part of the landowners must continue. It is very much to be deplored that the Government did not see their way when giving such exceedingly liberal terms of purchase to suspend the rent-fixing clauses of the Act of 1881. My Lords, I have no doubt that I, and those who think with me, will be classed in the irreconcilable section of landlords. To a certain extent this is correct. It is hard to reconcile oneself to unjust demands, to the theory that a man is to only hold property in Ireland until someone else wants it, to the proposition that a vendor is to accept any terms which a purchaser chooses to offer. But if we are approached in a different spirit, if we are allowed that liberty of action which any man is entitled to in a free country, and if any step is suggested to us which we can fairly take for the advantage of our country and countrymen, we shall not be found irreconcilable.

LORD CASTLETOWN: My Lords, I wish to divide the aspects of this Bill into three parts. I will deal with the past as it appeared some years ago, I will deal with the present and then with the possible future. In the past soon after the Act of 1881 had passed, I, and I think many other Irishmen, realised that the rent-fixing clauses of that Act must land the country in chaos, legal and financial. Twenty years ago seems a long time now, but, I dare say, if what we had suggested then had been adopted it would have saved a great deal of serious loss, serious financial and legal loss. Twenty years ago I moved a Resolution dealing with this very matter. I had just left the other House, having succeeded my father. I had been a Member of the other House during the period of the passage of the Act of 1881, and I brought forward a Motion which was approved, I am proud to say, on both sides of your Lordships' House. I regret, however, to say no action was taken. I believe that after this there was certainly a period during which attempts were made to bring forward purchase Bills. I assisted with others in Ireland to produce what was eventually the framework of the Bill which was brought in by the noble and learned Lord Ashbourne, and which was subsequently called the Ashbourne Act of 1886. Then it became daily and yearly more clear that some comprehensive measure of purchase would have to be introduced. But nothing was done except what I might call tinkering with the whole question, and very bad tinkering it was. At last we see a fairly comprehensive measure brought forward, which, so far as its main provisions are concerned, is very much on the lines suggested by myself and other Members of the House, and also by the public Press. Consequently, I hail the advent of this measure with the greatest of pleasure. But, as usual, when the best of laws come in, I am afraid this Bill, though comprehensive and full of excellent intentions, does not, and, in my opinion, will not do the really good work for which its author (and I give the greatest credit to Mr. Wyndham for the able way in which he piloted this Bill through the other House, and the intentions he brought it forward with) intended. I do not think the Bill will work unless the Government will admit of some Amendments of a non-contentious character being introduced into it in your Lordships' House. I only want to see Amendments inserted which will give alternative schemes of purchase to suit different districts and different estates, and also Amendments to give more vigorous effect to the measure, more efficacy, and more latitude generally in the provisions of the Bill. As to the purpose of the Bill I am in thorough sympathy with it.

I think on many estates it is absolutely necessary to sell, and all over Ireland it is very advisable, if not absolutely necessary, to try and re-introduce gravely, slowly and surely, freedom of contract in the only way in which it can be done, and that is by some system which will displace the rent-fixing portion of the Act of 1881. I find by reference to the figures which have been published on the sales, and of which I will only quote a few, that sales have gradually progressed since 1870. The first sale was under the Church Act, and they have progressed since then regularly and progressively. There has been a check lately, during the passage of this Bill in another place, that has interfered with that progress, but that check came from certain causes, which I should like to call attention to. I do not think it was owing to the desire of tenants not to purchase, but that as many of the second-term rents were falling in, that the tenants felt that they would get a larger reduction under the second-term rents than if they purchased, and therefore they held back, thinking that they would be able to extract more from the landlord than if they purchased direct from the Government and had to pay the instalments. That is the reason, I think, of the check in the purchase market. Many of the tenants have arrived at the view that they do not want to purchase at all, and it is noticeable that when a tenant-right is put up for sale, of a tenant who is still under a landlord, that that tenant-right commands a higher price than a tenant-right of a tenant who has purchased his holding. There is also a tendency to use an Act that is brought in up to a certain point, and then the people know that whatever Government are in power will probably bring some other Act that will produce something newer and more tempting to them, and they wait for the more tempting and more fascinating meal. This has been done for a very long time, and I think it has had a very disadvantageous effect on the country, and that is why I hope that this will really be a final measure.

As to the Bill itself I have some right to criticise it, as I have sold under the Acts of 1886 and 1896, and I have experienced all the difficulties there are in selling settled estates, and all the expenses that are incurred. This Bill, no doubt, has the very best intentions, but I am very doubtful if it is not very carefully amended whether it will work as smoothly as its authors think it will. Let me take the Estates Commissioners in the first case, a new body appointed under this Bill. They have enormous powers, and I am afraid their powers being so great and so drastic, that there will be a tendency to introduce, very much as the Land Commissioners did, such rules and regulations as will interfere with free sale, in the proper acceptation of the term. I am also of opinion that it would have been wiser, if I may say so, to have entrusted such enormous power to gentlemen in no way connected with the Land Commission, and rent-fixing Department, and, if I may say so without disrespect, these should have been men of the calibre of those to whom Mr. Gladstone entrusted the working of the Church of Ireland Act in 1870. This Act worked a great social revolution in Ireland, and it is to my mind a very strong measure, and not a very wise one, to have entrusted to these gentlemen who have been lowering rents a power to deal with the new departure. But the arrangement has been made, these men and their attributes have been discussed and accepted in the other House, and those in Ireland must put up with it, but I think if you had so large and so vast a scheme put forward for England or for Scotland, your Lordships would have appointed different administrators to those who have been utilised on this occasion. I wish to say nothing against the gentlemen appointed in the slightest degree, two of them are personal friends of my own, and I have a great opinion of their credit and status, and I believe the other gentleman comes of a very high Indian administrative body also. I only state what is my opinion, and that of a great many other people in Ireland. There is also a tendency under the Bill to make the Estates Commissioners a glorified second edition of the Congested Districts Board. Estates in no sense congested are to be gobbled up by them, and they are even to descend from their Olympian heights to such trivialities as dealing with fire insurance of farm buildings on those estates. It seems to me as if the Estates Commissioners are to govern, to insure, to depolice Ireland of her large body of police, and also to purchase large portions of Ireland at their own sweet will. Whether it is wise to entrust them with such wide powers is for your Lordships to decide. Personally I should be disposed to leave these powers in the hands of the Lands Commissioner, the Land Judge, and the high judicial authorities of Ireland, who are perfectly capable of dealing with them.

As to the details of the Bill, in the first place there are no alternative schemes of purchase, which, I think, is a great mistake, for the reason that in Ireland there are a large number of estates held on different terms and different conditions of possession; there are estates differing from each other as widely as the Hebrides and Devonshire; and I think it would be wise for an alternative scheme of purchase to be mentioned in the Bill, and I shall attempt to remedy this fault by proposing Amendments upon this matter when we come into Committee. Then with regard to the question of superior interests. I deal with those other than the superior interests of Trinity College, which are so carefully guarded by her representatives in the other House. Superior interests are of great value and average as much as £4,000 and £5,000 per annum on some estates. They are as valuable as Consols, fluctuating less, and generally charged in small amounts on large quantities of land, yet they are left in an absolute derelict state. If the landlords are to be induced to sell they must have wider powers of investment. These wider powers exist in nearly all new settlements, and I do appeal to the Lord Chancellor to see if he cannot arrange, when the time comes in Committee, that some such wider powers of investment may be permitted, so that when the Act comes into operation, as we hope it will, on a large scale, it may not dislocate all settled property in Ireland. I cannot see why such a provision should not be made so that the tenants for life and remainder men should agree to such wider provision for investment. If that is done your Lordships will enable a number of properties to be sold which otherwise will not come into the market. I have spoken to many landlords in Ireland, and it all comes to the same thing: "If you give wider facilities for investment I will sell, but if you only place trustees' securities at my disposal I will not sell." Then there are the terms which should be given to a desirable class of tenants who, when purchasing, put down a fourth of the price out of their own pockets. No assistance has been given to these tenants by the Bill.

Now, as to the future. I know it is most unwise to prophesy, but I feel—and this is my opinion as an Irishman that those who have advocated this great scheme in England have not thought out what may happen in the near future. They hope to keep the landowner, deprived of his estate and of all interest in the land, and, here I agree with the noble Lord Clonbrock in what he said, that it is to be hoped that the Bill will assist in keeping the landlords in Ireland. In my opinion the present generation may live on in Ireland, but I cannot help thinking that the next generation will not do so. I think the old homes will then pass into the hands of others—rich merchants, rich solicitors and other persons of wealth—and it may be very good for the country, I do not say for a moment that it will not, but in any case I believe that is exactly what will happen, and then will come the great problem which will be forced upon the Government—the condition of the present proprietors that have been created under this Bill. They must be safeguarded, as I have before urged strongly in your Lordships' House, under the best Continental system where these present proprietors have existed for 100 or 150 years. You must try and learn from the Continent how to watch over the interests of these men. I have been told that a Bill will be introduced next year to do this. I strongly urge the Government to accept some Amendment to deal with the question now. Those Amendments will be put down to prepare the ground for the Bill of next year when they choose to introduce it. But it is probable that this Government may not be in power next year, and the Government which is, may not care for this subject. What then will be the result? The whole system of social life is being changed in Ireland, and the change will be more rapid the moment this Bill becomes an Act and comes into operation. Let me implore those in power now, to investigate at once the best means of avoiding what might be a greater land and legal chaos than ever. I believe the Bill will be of benefit undoubtedly, not only to the owners and the occupiers, but to Ireland as a whole. If I did not believe so I certainly would vote against it. I hope also, the great sacrifice of sentiment and love for our homes, which many of us will be called upon to make in selling estates, will be received and returned to us with some thanks and consideration by our countrymen. But the question of the future is not so much the position of the landlords of the country, but that of the tenant purchaser created under this Bill. If they and the country benefit I do not object to the action of the Government, but I ask the Government to see clearly and be mindful and careful of the future of my countrymen; and on the condition that this measure shall not be regarded only as an expediency measure, but that it shall be treated, as I hope it will be, as a real, permanent, beneficent plan for creating and preserving a *bonâ fide* peasant proprietor, I shall support it.

EARL SPENCER: When I look at the clock I am reminded of one of the most melancholy moments I have ever passed through in your Lordships' House. It was twenty-two years ago that at 11 o'clock in the evening I had, on behalf of the Government, to wind up the first night's debate on one of the great Irish Land Bills. And, with the exception of my noble friend behind me, I do not think there was one of your Lordships present. (Cries of "No, No.") I see two noble Lords opposite who might have been present, but I do not think those noble Lords were present, because, if I recollect rightly, the audience I had to address on that occasion numbered only four. To-night there seems to be more interest about this great subject, and I am glad to see that greater interest taken in it. I do not think I need apologise to your Lordships, even if I did not hold the official place I hold in this House, for addressing you on the whole question, for, like the noble Duke the Lord President, I have been connected for over thirty years with a great many Irish measures for land legislation, and I have had considerable experience, I will not say more than the noble Duke has had, but I had, when I was in Ireland and he was in England, a great deal to do with the administration and superintendence of one of those great Acts. I do not think I need say much as to why the past legislation on this subject was necessary. I have had, as some of your Lordships have had, sad and grievous experience of ruling in Ireland. I have known times when there was almost armed revolution going on against the Government of the day, and the Government of the day was placed in the greatest possible difficulty. My Lords, I think those who have had similar experience to mine will agree that all the difficulties, perhaps not entirely all but a very great many of them, are to be attributed to the land tenure which prevails in that country. I have often heard people say that it came from wanton agitation. My Lords, I am not in favour or desirous of promoting agitation, but there is never smoke without fire, and there has never been a successful agitation in Ireland without great cause for discontent among the people. That discontent has to a great extent hung about the land. Now, my Lords, legislation with regard to the land is twofold; it falls in two grooves. There is legislation with regard to tenure, and also with regard to the purchase by the tenant occupier. I am not going to say much with regard to the legislation with regard to tenure, but I think it is right to say a few words, for there have been allusions to it to-night, and I could quote to you words which show what has been thought to be the line of policy of the legislation with regard to tenure. At this late hour of the night, what I would say of it is this, the words, used by Mr. Gladstone in another place and elsewhere, were to the effect that he did not attempt to legislate in any degree on any particular rule or to follow any theoretical principle, but he wished to apply in Ireland the customs which prevailed there, and those, I think, are the principles which guided him to a very great extent in the great measures which he passed.

Allusion has been made to the Act of 1881 by many speakers to-night. I was glad to hear what the noble Duke the Lord President said with regard to it. I agree with him that the legislation of 1881 probably, I may say certainly, could not be defended on the economic ground. I quite admit that, but I think that legislation was necessary to prevent greater evils coming into the country. Those were wise words of the noble Duke. They were repeated also somewhere by the Prime Minister, and allusion has been made to what he said. The Prime Minister said the difficulties were enormous in 1881, and it was difficult to say what ought to have been done by those responsible for the Government of that country, which seemed to be in the middle of a great land revolution. I wish to lay stress upon that. I entirely sympathise with a great deal that has been said about the position of the Irish landlords, and the effect this legislation has had. I lament that freedom of contract with tenants had to be interfered with. I lament that these Acts have interfered to a great extent with the power of sale in the country, but I think there has sometimes been a great deal of exaggeration as to the fall of values under the Land Act. That has been referred to to-night. I must admit that there has been a great distinction between voluntary Acts on the part of the landlords and the Acts of the Courts of the country. I also say with regard to the freedom of sale that the free sale of estates in Ireland since these Acts have come into force, based on the value of the land, depends on the rental of the land, and I do not think that Irish landlords have always considered and taken into account the great economic changes which have necessitated the lowering of rent.

Allusions have been made to the great difference of rent in this country and in Ireland. I cannot help alluding to it myself. No doubt there are a great many differences in rents in various localities, but there are districts in this country—rich and prosperous agricultural districts—where there has been an enormous fall in the value of rentals owing to the action of economic forces. I do not like to quote my own case, but I will quote that of a friend of mine, a man well known to your Lordships, I mean Lord Wantage. Lord Wantage—and all this appears in the Commission—succeeded through his wife to a very large and fine property in Northamptonshire. It was an old hereditary property which combined all sorts of farms, many of them probably in very bad order. He succeeded to property which comprised excellent land, and all the buildings on which were admirable, and in his evidence before the Commission Lord Wantage stated that the estate comprised 28,000 acres, and the gross rental was £29,000 a year. He compares that rental with what it was twenty years before, and he gives the figure for the year 1873. He says in 1873 the gross rental was £54,000, and in the year 1893 it was £29,000; that was a drop of £25,000 a year, not quite 50 per cent., but not very far off. I would call your Lordships' attention to what the net income of that estate was, and I instance that to show the difference between England and Ireland. In Ireland there are some estates which are managed on the English principle, but in most cases the tenants themselves are responsible for the permanent buildings. In England we have to maintain the buildings, the gates, the fences and the roads, and that makes the difference between the net and the gross income. I cannot give the net income for 1873, because within a few years there was a slight difference of sale and purchase, but I give it for the years 1877 and 1893. In 1877 it was £47,000 a year; in 1893 it was £12,000 a year, that is a very great—an enormous—difference in the value of an estate, and I doubt whether there are many cases in Ireland where so great a change in the value of the rental of land has taken place. As I said before, I do not wish to quote my own smaller property, but I confess, though I have not had as great difficulties as Lord Wantage, the figures I could give would very nearly agree with his. I need not dwell further upon the Act of 1881. Lord Crewe has very properly, and very truly, said that whether you like it or whether you do not, the Act of 1881 did enable, to a great extent, purchase to be taken up, because it gave the basis upon which the purchase could be carried out. With regard to the question of purchase, I have heard it said that the Unionist Party can claim purchase as their own. I deny that. I admit they have been very successful in some of these Acts, particularly that which is known by the name of the noble and learned Lord opposite, Lord Ashbourne. But purchase commenced at the time of the passing of the Church Act. We had it from the noble Marquess, who stated that what arose then had been the precursor of 1885.

THE MARQUESS OF LONDONDERRY: I quoted the figures because I thought that would make it more clear.

EARL SPENCER: I know, I know; but I should like to go a little further back than the noble Marquess has gone, and if we go a little further back we shall find that before the Act of 1885, £2,450,178 had been advanced on loans, and I believe that if that large sum is added to the large sum quoted by the noble Marquess you will find a very small proportion of arrears on the part of the tenant. Under the Church Act, £674,841 was advanced, and the number of loans issued was 6,057, and within two years I will venture to say every one of those who borrowed money under that Act will be absolute owners without having any further annuity to pay. We go on, and there have been a variety of Acts of Purchase. There was the Act of 1870, of 1881 and 1885, and then the Acts of 1891 and 1896. Now, I think, as has been said before, there had not been much done under the Bills which preceded the Bill of 1885. Up to that time the idea was this—it was Bright's idea—not to adopt in any Act the principle of making an owner of any tenant you could find, but only to take the tenants who were thrifty and would make good owners and good citizens, and in order to secure them, a considerable proportion, sometimes one-third and sometimes one-quarter of the value was left to them to pay out of their own pockets. That was the principle introduced in 1870, and that was the first Act which used the credit of the Bill. The Church Act advanced money out of the Church Funds. What happened? It was found that there were very few tenants who could pay a portion of the purchase money, and then the noble and learned Lord, in 1885, carried the first Act which proceeded on the plan of the whole of the money being advanced and for a longer period of repayment. Now I will give the noble Lord and the Government to which he belonged every credit for passing that measure, and the noble Lord will probably remember when he made his statement on its introduction that he referred to a Bill almost entirely forgotten now, which was a Bill for which I was partly responsible. Mr. Trevelyan of that day, afterwards Sir G. Trevelyan, introduced it in the other House, the Bill of 1884. That Bill was the first Bill which proposed that the whole money should be advanced to the tenant, and it also extended the time of repayment. The Bill did not go to the length of forty-nine years for the repayment, but I believe that it went to forty, so that in the Church Act, in the Act of 1870, in the Act of 1881, and in the Bill of 1884, the principle of purchase had been adopted by the Government to which I had the honour to belong. I remember very well that on the discussions on that BillI pointed out some of the difficulties which I knew would arise on the manner of payment. I will not read the whole of what I said, but I will read a few words because it will show that I was quite aware of the difficulty that would follow a large extension of the principle of greater assistance being given to the tenants when becoming purchasers of land.

> "It is a new thing to spread the repayment of an advance of this kind over a period of 49 years, and I object to so long a period as it prolongs all the risk that the State must run, besides creating a new and very grave danger to the landlords who do not wish to sell and whose tenants will naturally object to pay £100 a year rent when their neighbours are

only paying from £67 10s. to £87 10s. for the fee-simple of the land."

That is the *fons et origo* of the Bill that has now been introduced by the Government. The difficulty has been caused by those tenants who have purchased their land. By the marvellous working of the credit of the State, they not only purchase their land at a lower than their rent, but hold it at a much lower rent than if they had been simply tenants. It seems to be an extraordinary juggle, but it is a great compliment to the credit of the Government of this country that such a thing could be done. I need not now refer more to those Acts. I come now to another Bill. I cannot help alluding to it because I had a great hand in it, and that was the Home Rule Bill of 1886. I am not going to enter into the details of that great measure for Home Rule. It may have been right, and I believe that it was right. It may have been wrong. But I for one made it a condition for my supporting the Home Rule Bill that a great measure of land purchase should be introduced at the same time. I think I have been able to prove that on the great question of land purchase from 1879 to the date when this Bill was introduced, I have always been in favour of land purchase. I quite admit that those measures have not been quite so successful as they ought to have been, but I stand here to-night to say I staunchly believe that those defects ought to be remedied, and that if possible a complete and perfect Land Purchase Bill should be passed. I rather think the noble Duke said about that time that a cure for the difficulty of Irish land remained in purchase, and that the Bills which had been introduced had only been of the nature of a *modus vivendi.*

I now turn to this measure of the Government. It is a comprehensive and far-reaching measure; it sprang from a very novel and very happy circumstance which occurred in Ireland—namely, the coming together of two bodies who were always considered to be enemies that could never be reconciled, and who were generally in a state of most bitter warfare; I mean the landlords of Ireland and those who represented the tenants. I congratulate those who brought about that settlement. I have alluded on a previous occasion to the part taken in it by Lord Dunraven; he is one of those to whom great credit must be attached for bringing the conference together. But there are others to whom credit is due, I mean the Nationalist leaders of the people who joined the conference to bring matters to a conclusion. The question is whethe it will succeed. I do not propose to go into the details—there are a great many—details which have been referred to and to which I might refer—but on the Second Reading of the Bill it would not perhaps be wise for me to do so, and, possibly opportunities to discuss details will be given in Committee. This measure makes a very large demand on the tax-payers of the country, and it involves very greatly the credit of the nation, and makes us incur very large risks. But the dangers of agrarian difficulties are so great, and affect so largely the prosperity of that country, that it will be worth the expenditure of a very large sum of money if those dangers can be overcome. We are asked to give a present to Ireland. I will not say whether it is to go into the landlords or tenants' pockets, but we are asked to give £12,000,000 to make it possible that the sale of the property of the landlords to the tenants can be carried out to the extent of £100,000,000. That is a very large price to be asked to pay, if we are not to buy what is worth securing. But is it to be a reality, or are we merely buying a sham. Are we really securing the peace and prosperity of Ireland, or are we securing a fleeting advantage which will be submerged before long in a fresh sea of trouble. It is impossible to answer with certainty these questions. We cannot be certain what result this Bill will have, but I will join with my noble friends behind me and venture to say I am willing to take the risk, and I believe the risk is not large.

We have been told to-night, and I have heard over and over again that out of the large sums of annuities paid, under former transactions to the extent of £800,000 a year, hardly any deficiencies have taken place; that fact alone ought to give us confidence. But then it is said, suppose agitation and turmoil should again arise, will the tenants continue to pay? My answer to that is that for thirty-three years these proposals, in a lesser degree, but in a considerable degree, have been tried in Ireland, and that the people of Ireland have had to pay these large annuities for the purchase of their land, and that they have done it through two of the fiercest agitations and land wars that were possible to take place.

My Lords, I do not think I have much more to say, but there are two or three questions which, perhaps, are rather more than details, to which I should like to refer. With regard to this gift of £12,000,000, I did not quite understand Lord Dunraven, who said it was not a gift, but that it would be repaid in the long run. I may have misunderstood the noble Lord, but all that I understood him to say was that it would be repaid to this country. Well, I understand it is a gift, but it is a noble gift. This gift is to be paid, I understand, in small sums at the rate of £350,000 a year for some time. We are told that this will not all be paid by the British taxpayer, as there will be a saving in Ireland. We are told that something like £250,000 a year will be saved; that first of all the expenditure of the Land Courts will be diminished by over £140,000 a year; but I am afraid there will be considerable expenditure. From what I know of these Acts there will be a large expenditure in administration. Then there is to be less spent on Police and other matters. I say at once I consider this idea a very noble idea, and one that we ought to praise and admire very much. But I am afraid it will be to a very great extent a dream. There is hardly anyone who has been in Ireland who has not tried to diminish expenditure of this kind. In my own humble way I tried, and in some measure succeeded, but I have a very sad recollection even now in the matter. I cut off a Judge in one of the Courts, and at the moment I left Ireland, which I did not very long afterwards, that Judge was replaced by a Conservative Government.

Lord ASHBOURNE: The noble Lord had not cut him off according to my recollection; he had left him surviving.

Earl SPENCER: I am speaking of the time before the noble Lord was Lord Chancellor. I have no doubt the noble and learned Lord will introduce great changes in the salaries of the Judges and legal officers in Ireland. Anyhow, I rejoice that now a Conservative Government in Ireland propose economy. I hope his anticipations in that regard may be fulfilled. I may be wrong, and I certainly trust that the present Government may succeed in diminishing the expenditure.

There is another point to which I attribute very great importance. That is the appointment of Commissioners. Now, I am sorry to say, one of the banes of the administration in Ireland is the continual political pressure and influence that is brought to bear on the Government of the day. I do not say that one party more than another is to blame for that, both the landlords on the one side and the Nationalists on the other are implicated. I was free from that as to the Nationalists because they were not in any communication with me when I was in office, but there is that pressure brought to bear on the work of the Government of that country. I regretted it and I always endeavoured to diminish it when I had the power to do so. When these first Acts were passed and bodies were appointed, the idea of Mr. Gladstone and all others concerned, was to appoint men of the highest position and character and who were entirely removed from all political influence. I do not say who is to blame, but I am afraid your Lordships are somewhat to blame, because I remember that the Bill of 1881 had hardly begun to grow before your Lordships wished to pull up the plant in order to see how the roots were going on. That began the attack, and the Nationalist party were not slow in carrying it out, from the opposite side, and I believe that the Commissioners were a sort of shuttlecock of the parties, and I should be surprised to hear now if that has been altered. Now I readily admit that when you come to consider the positions in which these Commissioners have been placed for some years past, there is a strong desire to alter them, but how can it be done without running the greater risk of political pressure than has existed before? The Government have taken a very curious course. What do they do in this Bill? In this Bill the Chief Commissioner is a man for whom I have great regard and a man of high capacity, although not in office with me. I think he is now a Knight, although I knew him as plain Mr. Wrench. His salary is on the Consolidated Fund, and he must be removed from office by an Address. His colleagues, however, the other two Commissioners, are mere servants of the Administration of the day, and I readily foresee that attacks will be raised against them in another place where they are not so particular with regard to attacks as we are in this House. This is a very difficult problem, but I wish to call attention to it and to ask for some modification, at all events of what I call the hot and cold plan adopted by the Government.

Now I have referred to the Bill of 1884 and also to the Bill of 1886, both of which were unsuccessful, but they contained a principle which I regret is not to be found in this Bill. It is what Lord Salisbury once called "the buffer" between the Imperial Government and the occupiers of land who are going to pay these annuities. In both of these Bills there was a buffer, and Lord Ashbourne pointed out that the buffer of 1884 was the cause of that Bill not going through. In the Bill of 1886 we went a great deal farther, and there was the great interest of the local authorities to get a direct benefit of the annuity. I regret in this Bill that there is no such buffer, and I think that is one of its defects.

My Lords, I have pointed out the objections to the Bill, but on the whole I support it and I heartily wish it success. I believe if it succeeds the greatest credit will be due to those who introduced it. My Lords, we have indications that there is a better feeling in Ireland with regard to all these disputes which have torn the country in halves in past years. In the other place there seems to be some inclination to accept the solution, and we rejoice at the good feeling which has been displayed in Ireland during the visit of our gracious Sovereign. The tact and ability of His Majesty, combined with Her Majesty's grace and charm, has shown the people of Ireland how much they are valued by their Sovereigns. Now my Lords all these signs do not for a moment, to my mind, prove that we are to get rid of the old questions which separate parties in Ireland. There are a great many questions besides the land question which are felt deeply and strongly in that country. These questions will not be swept away by these improvements. What will happen, I hope and believe, will be that the old methods of violence and intimidation will disappear and that the people in Ireland will learn that by free and open discussion and by constitutional methods, they may obtain from Parliament any great changes which may be necessary for the welfare of that country.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (The Marquess of LANSDOWNE): We who are responsible for the Bill which we ask your Lordships to read a second time have no reason to complain of the manner in which it has been received by your Lordships' House. The measure has not escaped criticism, and those criticisms have been of the most reasonable description, but I think I am right in saying that with the solitary exception of the noble Lord, Viscount Hampden, not one of your Lordships who has spoken to-night has failed to express a desire that this Bill should become law, and that it should succeed in producing the results desired for it by everyone. My Lords, that aspiration I very cordially echo, and I trust with other noble Lords to-night that the Bill will be received by both landlords and tenants in such a manner as to render it completely successful.

We have had to-night a considerable number of excursions into the regions of history—the history of that much vexed Irish land question—and into questions which on so many occasions have required attention from your Lordships' House. Nothing is further from my purpose than to revive the old controversies of 1881. No greater waste of time could take place than by an attempt to indulge in idle recriminations, as to the course followed by the legislation of that time. The noble Lords on the Front Bench opposite, may be quite right when they tell your Lordships that in 1881 the condition of things in Ireland was such as to render it absolutely necessary that strong measures should be taken. We differed as to the character of those measures, but this fact at any rate remains, that the result of the legislation of 1881, has been to saddle the country with a system of land laws which has proved to be absolutely unworkable and intolerable to those who are most affected by it. My Lords, the noble Earl who spoke last rather suggested to your Lordships that the Irish landlords had no grievance, which the land owners of other parts of the Kingdom had not experienced in this line.

EARL SPENCER: I must differ from the noble Marquess; I did not say they had no grievance, but that they exaggerated it, and did not sufficiently know the difficulty in which the English landlord was placed.

*THE MARQUESS OF LANDSDOWNE: I think the argument was that the Irish landlords exaggerated their grievance, because the English and Scotch landlords had to submit to reductions of rent equal to or, in some cases, even greater than those to which Irish land was subject at that time. Now, what we complain of is that not merely were our rents reduced, but we that were deprived of that power of barganing with our tenants which is enjoyed by landlords in other parts of the country.

EARL SPENCER: I specially excepted that.

*THE MARQUESS OF LANDSDOWNE: That is the grievance we complain of, and which remains. The system is at any rate, cordially distrusted both by the landlords and the tenants. So far as I am aware, there is no system of land tenure at all resembling it in any other part of the world. The landlords find themselves in the position of rent chargers without the security that generally accompanies a rent-charge. The tenants on the other hand have no confidence in the system, and are perpetually looking forward to reductions of rent at the hands of the Land Commission. The result is that there is no inducement to the Irish tenants to farm their land properly or to develop the resources of the country, while both landlords and tenants find themselves condemned to never ceasing litigation, the end of which no one can foresee. That is the position of the landlords and tenants, and, on the other hand, the taxpayers of the United Kingdom, find themselves saddled with the cost of maintaining this immense judicial staff, entrusted with the business of revising rents, and also with that of a large staff of police that, as we know, is generally employed in connection with disputes arising from agrarian cases.

The defects of the system are admirably summarised in the Report of the Fry Commission, a weighty document which I sometimes think did not receive all the attention it deserved. The Fry Commission say of the system which it was called upon to investigate that it is a complicated system that is characterised by great delay, that it is costly to the country and that it produces in that part of the United Kingdom, which every one knows sorely needs quiet and tranquillity, a sense of abiding unrest. I cannot conceive any stronger condemnation.

As has been pointed out several times in the course of this debate, there stands out in this great wilderness of failure one point on which our legislation has been completely and triumphantly successful. I mean that part of our system of land law which has reference to purchase and sale. That part of our land system, whether we regard it from a political point of view or with reference to its financial aspects, has been completely successful. My lords, I observe that the noble Earl was careful to point out that the Unionist Party could not claim to themselves the sole credit for having invented this system of purchase and sale. It is pleasant to see that there is a kind of rivalry for the paternity of this part of the measure, but we may at any rate claim that it was our legislation which first brought about the practical results which have attended land purchase in Ireland. The cardinal difficulty with which purchase in Ireland had hitherto had to contend lay in this. We have been working in two parallel grooves, namely, the groove of purchase and the groove of tenure. We have seen that the attractions which our legislation as to tenure has offered have been so great as to render to a great extent the attractions offered by purchase nugatory and inoperative. The position of the tenant as a tenant has been so strong and advantageous that we have found ourselves obliged to offer him something like a bribe in order to induce him to abdicate that position and become the owner of his holding, instead of, as might have been expected under ordinary circumstances, finding that the tenant was willing to pay something additional in order to convert his tenancy into absolute ownership. That is the explanation, which Lord Crewe called a gigantic paradox, of the position in Ireland at this moment. We know that the stream of purchase has lately been drying up and that unless we do something to set it flowing again, purchase will become a dead letter in Ireland. This Bill is frankly a purchase measure, and it seems to me inconceivable that the inducements it offers should not have the effect of bringing in a large number of tenants.

Some doubts have been expressed as to the results of the measure. I was glad to hear the noble Lord express his entire confidence in those results. I believe the public will be amply secured for the advances to be made to the tenants, and that nothing is more improbable than that there should be anything like a general movement amongst them for the purpose of withholding the payment of rent-charges they will owe to the State. I believe that the tenant farmers of Ireland are as a body of men extremely shrewd and alive to their own interests, and it seems to me incredible that the tenants in the position which they will occupy after they have purchased, owning so immensely valuable an interest, acquired on such easy terms, will be found either singly or in combination with others to risk the forfeiture of that interest. I am under the strong impression that the tenants of Ireland have realised the folly of the anti-rent movement into which some of them were unfortunately inveigled, with such unfortunate results. I doubt whether we shall see any revival of those strikes against rent, and I certainly do not expect to see any organised resistance to the performance of the obligations which will be contracted under this Bill.

One or two noble Lords lamented the fact that this Bill would lead to the extinction of the landlord class in Ireland. I think that was said by the noble Duke who spoke second, and the sentiment was re-echoed by others. That, again, is an anticipation which I do not share. I believe, on the contrary, that the Bill, as it has been framed, contains many inducements to resident owners of land in Ireland to remain in that country and to interest themselves in its affairs. We have heard several descriptions of the inducements offered to landlords in this way. One noble Lord mentioned amongst them that the Irish landowner who continued to reside upon his property would still have an opportunity of finding himself eligible for the office of High Sheriff. I am not quite sure whether that is an inducement which would operate largely. I seem to recollect taking part in meetings held under the presidency of the noble Duke behind me for the purpose of pricking the sheriffs. We did not always find there was a great competition for the honour of filling that high office. But there are other and more substantial inducements in the Bill. One is the provision under which the Irish landowner is allowed to sell and then to repurchase on liberal terms his desmesne and family home. That will have the result of enabling many men, particularly those whose property is of modest extent, and who are unfortunately in the position of having to meet heavy encumbrances to remain in possession of their ancestral homes.

Another matter dwelt upon in connection with this branch of the case was the question of sporting rights. That question of sporting rights will, no doubt, be discussed in Committee, and all I will say about it now is that the Bill seems to be drawn in such a way as to enable any landlord who really has established exclusive sporting rights over his property to retain those rights. If he can show that he actually has, at the time of sale, an exclusive right to sporting, he is put in the position of retaining that right, and I really suggest to those noble Lords who have pressed this point, that unless the landlord is able to show he has established the exclusive right of sporting, he has very little to gain by endeavouring to secure the survival of partial and imperfect rights enforced against reluctant tenants who would not be likely to give him much assistance in game or fish preservation.

My Lords, some criticism has been made on that part of the Bill that deals with the question of zones, and regret has been expressed that the Bill as originally framed was not adhered to, and that it now contains a clause under which it will be possible for landlords and tenants to make arrangements outside the limits of the zones. Personally, I should have been very glad if we could have kept the Bill in its original shape, but it was impossible to resist the arguments brought forward to show that in some cases there were likely to be transactions which could not equitably be kept within the limits of the zones, and, as I think, the noble Duke told your Lordships, it is quite obvious that transactions within the zones will be much more tempting to landlords and tenants, inasmuch as they will be of a much more simple character, and will be carried through with greater rapidity and ease. There is also this to be borne in mind, that permission given for transactions outside the limits of the zones may, upon occasion, enable the landlord to obtain a price in excess of the maximum limit specified in the zone, where the property sold is of exceptional importance or value.

My Lords, with regard to the bonus upon which the noble Earl briefly touched, he was certainly right in saying that the bonus is a free gift to the vendor, and is intended for the purpose of facilitating sales. Such an inducement is particularly needed in a certain class of cases, in which, in the past, sales have proved impossible; owing to the loss of income occasioned by the stoppage of rent and the necessity of having to pay interest on mortgages, and in which the vendor of the estate was liable to find himself for a time in extremely straightened circumstances, and many owners were no doubt deterred by this apprehension. It is in that class of case precisely that it is most desirable to encourage sales, and in that class of case the bonus will be an immense inducement to the owner to sell.

At this late hour of the evening I do not desire to take up the time of the House. We have been warned to-night, from several quarters, that we must expect proposals for the amendment of this Bill in Committee, and, no doubt, it is only right and proper that in this House, where the owners of land in Ireland are so numerous and so ably represented, that the Bill should be examined critically and Amendments moved if any weak points can be discovered, but I will venture strongly to urge on your Lordships that it will be most unfortunate if, in this House, any Amendment were to be insisted upon which could be regarded as seriously subversive of the principle on which this Bill is based. This Bill represents the result of a compromise arrived at laboriously and after much discussion between the landlords and tenants, and also between the parties concerned and the taxpayers of this country who are called upon to find the credit and cash which are necessary in order to make this Bill a workable measure. My Lords, it would be to my mind a grave misfortune if any Amendments made in this House were to disturb the careful balance upon which this Bill has been constructed in reference to those three interests.

To my mind the value of the Bill is to be measured, not only by its contents but also because it is an indication of that better understanding between Irish landlords and Irish tenants which now so happily exists, that better feeling has been again and again this evening attributed to the efforts of the Conference and of the noble Earl whose name is so closely connected with that most useful discussion. My Lords, to me it seems that any changes which might re-open a question now happily settled, or might, by substituting an atmosphere of suspicion and doubt for the environment of good feeling, good will, confidence and hope in which this measure first saw the light, would be a grave misfortune. I earnestly trust that no proceeding to which your Lordships House may be a party will have the effect of in any way diminishing the favourable prospects with which this measure has been brought forward.

LORD KILMAINE: My Lords, I take a very great interest in the Bill, and my excuse for intervening at this late hour is that great interest. I am one of those who are very sanguine of its going a long way towards settling the land question. In dealing with the Bill your Lordships must bear in mind the results of experience gained in previous Purchase Acts. My experience goes back to the Act of 1885, when the results were so satisfactory to the tenants who purchased that they are an encouragement to other landlords who sell under the Bill. In 1886 and 1887 I sold, in the counties of Mayo and Roscommon, holdings bringing in some £3,000 or £4,000 a year, and the average term was nineteen years purchase. Out of the 300 purchasing tenants, 100 tenants paid me £5 or less, another 100 from £5 to £10, and a third hundred from £10 to £100. The estate was free from arrears, and rent was paid for twenty-five years punctually up to 1876, but arrears had accrued between 1876 and 1886, so that when the Land Commissioner inspected the holding he was rather alarmed and recommended that I should agree to a deposit of one half. The most encouraging part of my story is that not one of these 300 tenants failed in paying a single instalment to the State, and the guaranteed deposits were safe. Last year I attended on the estate and I found the tenants happy and contented. They were proud of the improvements they had carried out, they had largely increased their stock, and their wives and children were comfortably and tidily dressed. Out of the whole number only six of the holdings had been resold. In all cases the sellers got as much or more than they paid for the farms, and in one farm near Castlebar, which was purchased from me at £1,620 it was resold for £2,450.

With regard to the sporting rights, I may tell your Lordships that I gave them up with the properties sold, and at that time there was a considerable amount of game on the estate. When two years ago my son visited the estate for the first time all the purchasing tenants welcomed him most warmly, and offered that in the event of his returning there with his wife to live in that part of the country they would give him back the sporting rights and do their best to preserve the game. He has gone back there to live, and they have redeemed their promise. Your Lordships, I find from Mr. Bailey's report that his experience on a large scale is the same as mine, and that the improvements on these purchased estates has been generally maintained. This information is most reassuring, and we have every reason to hope that the present Bill will be even more successful in settling the land question on a large scale. Let us hope it will be the means of bringing peace and contentment to the Irish tenantry, whose future we have at heart so much. My Lords, I believe that in the near future our gracious Sovereign the King will be able to point to Ireland as being as loyal and law-abiding as any other part of his vast Empire.

On Question, that the Bill be read a second time,

Agreed to.

Bill read 2^a accordingly, and committed to a Committee of the Whole House on Thursday next.

BILLS OF EXCHANGE ACT, 1882, AMENDMENT BILL [H.L.].

House in Committee (according to order): Bill reported without Amendment: Standing Committee negatived; and Bill to be read 3^a to-morrow.

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE: My Lords, in moving that the House be adjourned, it may be convenient to announce that we propose to take the Committee stage of the Land Bill on Thursday.

House adjourned at a quarter past Twelve o'clock a.m. till a quarter past Four o'clock p.m.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Monday, 3rd August, 1903.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

THE CHAIRMAN OF WAYS AND MEANS.

The Clerk at the Table informed the House of the unavoidable absence of the Chairman of Ways and Means.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

PRIVATE BILLS [LORDS] (STANDING ORDERS NOT PREVIOUSLY INQUIRED INTO COMPLIED WITH).

MR. SPEAKER laid upon the Table Report from one of the Examiners of Petitions for Private Bills, That, in the case of the following Bill, originating in the Lords, and referred on the First Reading thereof, the Standing Orders not previously inquired into, and which are applicable thereto, have been complied with, viz. :—North Metropolitan Electric Power Supply Bill [Lords].

Ordered, That the Bill be read a second time.

Bournemouth Gas and Water Bill [Lords]. Read the third time, and passed, with an Amendment.

Manchester Corporation Bill [Lords]; Scottish Ontario and Manitoba Land Company Bill [Lords]. Read the third time, and passed, with Amendments.

Brighton Corporation Bill [Lords]. As amended, considered; Amendments made; Bill to be read the third time.

Hastings Harbour District Railway Bill [Lords]; Liverpool University Bill [Lords]. As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

Preston, Chorley, and Horwich Tramways Bill [Lords]. As amended, considered; an Amendment made; Bill to be read the third time.

South Staffordshire Tramways Bill [Lords]. As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

Education Board Provisional Order Confirmation (London) Bill [Lords]; Gas and Water Orders Confirmation Bill [Lords]. Read the third time, and passed, with Amendments.

Airdrie and Coatbridge Tramways Order Confirmation.—Bill to confirm a Provisional Order under The Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, relating to Airdrie and Coatbridge Tramways, ordered to be brought in by the Lord Advocate and Mr. Solicitor-General for Scotland.

Airdrie and Coatbridge Tramways Order Confirmation Bill.—"To confirm a Provisional Order under The Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, relating to Airdrie and Coatbridge Tramways." Presented accordingly; and ordered to be considered to-morrow.

Lerwick Harbour Improvements Act (1877) Amendment Order Confirmation.—Bill to confirm a Provisional Order under The Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, relating to Lerwick Harbour, ordered to be brought in by the Lord Advocate and Mr. Solicitor-General for Scotland.

Lerwick Harbour Improvements Act (1877) Amendment Order Confirmation Bill.—"To confirm a Provisional Order under The Private Legislation Procedure (Scotland) Act, 1899, relating to Lerwick Harbour." Presented accordingly; and ordered to be considered to-morrow.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have agreed to—Public Offices (Dublin) Bill; Local Government Provisional Orders (No. 5) Bill; Metropolitan Police Provisional Order Bill; Castleblaney, Keady, and Armagh Railway (Extension of Time) Bill, without Amendment.

Military Lands Bill, with an Amendment.

Pistols Bill; Ebbw Vale Water and Improvement Bill—now, Ebbw Vale Improvement Bill; Western Valleys (Monmouthshire) Sewerage Board Bill; Stroud and District Tramways Bill; Erith Tramways and Improvement Bill, with Amendments.

Amendments to—Manchester Southern Tramways Bill [Lords]; Gosport and Fareham Tramways Bill [Lords], without Amendment.

PETITIONS.

CONGESTED DISTRICTS (SCOTLAND) (No. 2) BILL.

Petition from Stornoway, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

SALE OF INTOXICATING LIQUORS ON SUNDAY BILL.

Petition from Faringdon, in favour; to lie upon the Table.

SHIP CANAL BETWEEN THE FIRTHS OF FORTH AND CLYDE.

Petition from Alloa, in favour of construction; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

REVENUE BILL.

Copy ordered "of Memorandum Explanatory of the Revenue Bill."—(*Mr. Elliot.*)

Copy presented accordingly; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 307.]

CUNARD STEAMSHIP COMPANY, LIMITED.

Copy presented, of an Agreement, dated 30th July, 1903, between the Admiralty, the Board of Trade, and the Postmaster-General, of the one part, and the Cunard Steamship Company, Limited, of the other part, with Copy of Treasury Minute thereon, dated 31st July 1903, and Copies of the said Company's Memorandum and Articles of Association and of a draft Trust Deed for securing Debenture Stock [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

CANADA (PREFERENTIAL TARIFF FOR GOODS FOR THE UNITED KINGDOM).

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 29th July; *Mr. Alfred Davies*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 310.]

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD.

Copy presented, of Supplement to the Thirty-first Annual Report of the Local Government Board, 1901–2, in continuation of the Report of the Medical Officer for 1901–2, on Lead Poisoning and Water Supplies, Vol. II. [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

GREENWICH HOSPITAL AND TRAVERS' FOUNDATION.

Copy presented, of Statement of the estimated Income and Expenditure of Greenwich Hospital and of Travers' Foundation for the year 1903–4 [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 311.]

PUBLIC WORKS LOANS BILL.

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 29th July; *Mr. Elliot*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 309.]

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Yeomanry Training on Chobham Common.

MR. REMNANT (Finsbury, Holborn): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he is aware that the 3rd Company of London Imperial Yeomanry, which is at present undergoing its annual training at Chobham, has been forbidden to manœuvre on Chobham Common; and, if so, will he state the reason for such prohibition.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*) This company has been refused permission to manœuvre on Chobham Common, but I am not aware of the reasons for the refusal. It has, however, been granted permission to manœuvre in Windsor Park.

Construction of Rackwick Road Walls, Orkney.

MR. CATHCART WASON (Orkney, Shetland): To ask the Lord Advocate if, in view of the facts that have been laid before the Congested Districts Board, an independent officer will be sent to report to the Board on the Rackwick Road, Walls, Orkney, and the necessity or otherwise for its immediate construction.

(*Answered by Mr. A. Graham Murray.*) The Secretary for Scotland is not of opinion that any special inquiry is necessary in regard to the proposed Rackwick Road. The Congested Districts Board will consider the respective importance of this and other roads submitted by the County Council as soon as the Board are satisfied that the roads towards which grants have already been authorised are approaching completion, and an inquiry will be sent to the County Council asking for a report as to the exact state of progress of the several roads for which grants have been authorised.

Construction of Causeway at Longhope, Orkney.

MR. CATHCART WASON: To ask the Lord Advocate if he will state what steps have been taken by the Congested Districts Board to secure the fulfilment of the arrangement for the construction of a causeway over the Ayre at Longhope, Orkney.

(*Answered by Mr. A. Graham Murray.*) The Congested Districts Board are informed that with the exception of a portion which it is proposed to leave uncausewayed until next year in order to test the effect of the winter storms, the causeway is expected to be finished by the end of September.

Increment to Telegraphists for postal knowledge—Case at Shrewsbury.

MR. NANNETTI (Dublin, College Green): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that four telegraphists stationed at the Shrewsbury office, who were transferred from amalgamated offices, have received the increment for postal knowledge, while another telegraphist at the same town, who was transferred from an amalgamated office, has been refused the increment; and, if so, whether he will explain the reason for this difference of treatment, and have the case investigated, with a view to the concession of the increment.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) As I stated in reply to a similar Question on Friday,† if the name of the officer referred to is furnished I will inquire into the matter.

Sea Sorting Post Offices on Cunard Liners.

MR. ALFRED DAVIES (Carmarthen Boroughs): To ask the Postmaster-General if he can state whether any, and, if so, what, arrangement has now been made for the establishment of sea sorting post offices on the mail steamers to New York of the Cunard line.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) I must refer the hon. Member to the Answer given to his Question on this subject asked on the 9th of last month.‡ I am not in a position to give further information

Publication of Registrar General's Report and Supplement to Annual Report of Local Government Board

MR. D. A. THOMAS (Merthyr Tydvil): To ask the President of the Local Government Board when the Sixty-fourth Annual Report (Births, Deaths, and Marriages, England) of the Registrar General for 1901, presented 4th August 1902, and when the Supplement to the Thirty-first Annual Report of the Local Government Board, 1901–2, containing the Report of the Medical Officer for 1901–2, presented 3rd November 1902, will be delivered; if he can say what has been the cause of the delay in the publication of these Reports; and if he will take steps to alter the practice of presenting Command Papers in dummy in one session when not ready, and not delivering them until the next, in view of the inconvenience involved.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) As regards the Annual Report of the Registrar General, I am informed that it will be issued with very little further delay. The Registrar General states that the Report has been delayed exceptionally this year on account of the heavy pressure in his office due to the preparation of the Census Returns, and also to an important change which it has been found necessary to make in the tabulation of deaths. The Report of the Medical Officer of the Local Government Board, to which the hon. Member refers, has gone to press and will, I understand, probably be issued within a month. The issue of the Report this year has been delayed through the amount of special work which has been thrown on the medical branch in connection with the recent smallpox epidemic. I am desirous that Reports which are presented in dummy should be issued as soon as possible afterwards; but, as the hon. Member will see, the delay in the present cases was due to exceptional circumstances.

Indian Commercial Relations with Tibet.

Mr. DILLON (Mayo, E.): To ask the Secretary of State for India whether he can give any information as to the negotiations alleged to be in progress between the Governments of China and of India as to India's commercial relations with Tibet; whether the Government of India has it in contemplation to impose any system of commercial relations on the Government of Tibet; and, whether he can lay any Papers upon the Table giving information as to the commercial resources of Tibet.

(*Answered by Secretary Lord George Hamilton.*) The negotiations shortly to commence will deal with difficulties which have risen in the conduct of trade between India and Tibet under the regulations drawn up and signed by British and Chinese Commissioners in 1893 to give effect to the Convention of 1890 between Great Britain and China. The negotiations will also deal with grazing and other disputes on the northern frontier of Sikkim and Tibet, which were laid down in the Convention. This Convention and the regulations have been published as a Parliamentary Return [C. 7312] of session 1894. As to the commercial resources of Tibet, there are no Papers which I can lay on the Table of the House. The imports from Tibet into India during the last five years averaged £115,000 per annum. The chief article of import is wool. A certain amount of borax, musk, salt, and living animals is also imported.

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† See page 1080.

‡ See (4) *Debates*, cxxv., 150.

Irish Education—Fees for Teaching Irish.

MR. J. F. X. O'BRIEN (Cork): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in national schools in Ireland, the principal teacher has authority to return his own name, solely, on the annual Returns for the teaching of Irish, notwithstanding that his assistant has also taught it during the annual period, but whose name does not appear on the annual sheets; and whether, in such a case, any remedy is open to the assistant by which he might recover his share of the fees earned by teaching this extra subject.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) I am informed by the Commissioners that the principal teacher has no authority to return his own name as sole teacher of Irish, if instruction is also given in the subject by the assistant teacher. If the hon. Member will communicate to the Commissioners the particulars of any such case the matter will be inquired into and a remedy applied if necessary.

Persons in receipt of Relief Return.

MR. O'SHEE (Waterford, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Return standing on to-day's Paper, relative to Boards of Guardians (Persons in receipt of Relief), similar to the Return recently ordered for England and Wales, will be granted.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) On Tuesday last I pointed out to the hon. Member that the preparation of a Return such as suggested would entail an immense amount of labour on the part of local authorities, and that I hesitate to impose this labour, the more particularly at the present moment, when the Poor Law Commission propose to compile statistics in the matter which will be duly published.

The Return referred to is as follows—Boards of Guardians (Persons in Receipt of Relief) Return showing, in respect of each union and urban or rural district in Ireland, the number of persons of each sex in receipt from Boards of Guardians (*a*) of indoor relief or (*b*) of out-door relief on the first day of October, 1903, who were over sixty years of age, distinguishing those who were over sixty and under sixty-five, sixty-five and under seventy, seventy and under seventy-five, seventy-five and under eighty, and eighty years of age and upwards; lunatics in asylums, licensed houses, and registered hospitals; vagrants and persons who were only in receipt of relief constructively by reason of relief being given to wives or children, not being included; and showing in regard to (*a*) the number of those who in the opinion of the medical officer of the workhouse could not satisfactorily take care of themselves owing to mental or physical infirmity.

Revision Court for Dalkey.

MR. FIELD (Dublin, St. Patrick): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has received resolutions from the Killiney and Dalkey Urban District Councils requesting that a revision Court may be held in Dalkey; and, if so, whether he will advise the Lord Lieutenant to arrange this.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham*). An official communication on this subject was addressed to the hon. Member on the 1st instant. To that communication I have nothing to add.

Health of John M'Elligott, a Prisoner in Dundalk Gaol.

MR. DILLON: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has received any reports from the Medical Officer of Dundalk Gaol as to the condition of health of John M'Elligott; whether he is aware that M'Elligott is 76 years of age, and that he has been now two years in prison for contempt of Court; and whether it has been brought under his notice that one of M'Elligott's daughters has offered to take her father's place in prison if the Court will release M'Elligott; and, if so, will he state whether he can take any action in the matter.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) Reports on the condition of health of prisoners committed for contempt of Court are made at regular intervals to the committing Judge. The medical officer of the prison states that M'Elligott is sleeping and eating well, and is in a better condition of health than when he was first committed. I have no information in respect to the second part of the Question, and can only repeat what I stated in answer to the honourable Member's previous Question of the 13th July,† that the Master of the Rolls has on several occasions informed the prisoner that a verbal undertaking to abstain from repeating his contempt will be followed by immediate release.

Suggested Steamer Service between Sligo and Galway.

Dr. AMBROSE (Mayo, W.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland, whether, in view of the fact that the agricultural and manufacturing industries along the coast of Mayo are handicapped owing to the railway charges for the carriage of goods, and that a steamer service between Sligo and Galway, calling at the different towns on the coast of Mayo, would materially assist the development of those industries by cheapening the transit of goods, he will see that such a service is established.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) If, as I hope, a harbour is constructed at Inishlyre, it is not unreasonable to expect that steamers will call there without subsidies.

Military Books for Officers' Messes.

Colonel WYNDHAM MURRAY (Bath): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether, in view of the cost of military books to officers and of the fact that there is a military library only at large stations, where the greater part of the Army has not access to it, he will make arrangements to supply to each mess a library of standard military works to enable all officers to study their profession.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*) This question has been and is now under consideration, but it is not possible to make any statement on the subject at present.

Full Head-dress for Royal Irish Rifles Militia.

Mr. CHARLES CRAIG (Antrim S.): To ask the Secretary of State for War, whether he is aware that during the King's visit to the North of Ireland a guard of honour of Royal Irish Rifles Militia had to borrow their full head-dresses from the regular battalion of the same regiment owing to the fact that full head-dress has never yet been provided for the men of Militia rifle battalions; and, if so, will he say when such full head-dress will be provided.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*) Militia Rifle battalions, Fusiliers, and Highlanders have no full dress head-dress, and, in view of the heavy expense, there is no intention of issuing it.

Great Britain and Canada—Bounties on Pig Iron.

Sir WILLIAM HARCOURT (Monmouthshire, W.): To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies whether, when the preferential tariff in favour of Great Britain by Canada was increased in 1897-1898 to 25 per cent., the bounty given on iron was increased from 2 dols. to 3 dols. per ton; what was the production of pig iron in Canada in 1897 and in 1901; whether, when the question of preferential duties was discussed at the Conference in 1902, any proposal was made to abandon the condemned principle of bounties to private manufacture in Canada; and whether it is proposed to establish bounties on iron in Australia.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Chamberlain.*) In 1898 the bounty on pig iron made from Canadian ore was raised from 2 dols. to 3 dols per ton. The bounty on pig iron made from imported ore remained at 2 dols. per ton. The production of pig iron in Canada in 1897 was 58,007 tons, and in 1901 274,376 tons. The question of bounties was not discussed at the Conference. I have no information as to any proposal to establish bounties in Australia.

Immigrants into Canada.

Mr. D. A. THOMAS: To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if he can state the number of immigrants into the Dominion of Canada in 1900 and 1901 respectively, distinguishing between those of the following nationalities: United States, British, Galicians, Germans, Scandinavians, French, Belgians, Doukhobors, and other nationalities.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Chamberlain.*) Owing to the change in 1900 of the period for which immigration statistics in Canada are given from the calendar year to the fiscal year, which ends on 30th June, I am unable to give the Return desired; but probably the following information from the latest Report of the Canadian Department of the Interior will be sufficient.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxxv., 407.

Immigrants into Canada for settlement, 1899 to 1902 :—

Nationality.	1899.	1900 (six months) to 30th June.	Year ending 30th June.	
			1901.	1902.
United States - - - - -	11,945	8,543	17,987	26,388
English and Welsh - - - -	8,576	4,129	9,401	13,095
Scotch - - - - - - - -	1,337	669	1,476	2,853
Irish - - - - - - - -	747	343	933	1,311
Galicians - - - - - - -	6,700	4,992	4,702	6,550
Germans - - - - -	780	476	984	1,048
Scandinavians - - - - -	1,526	714	1,750	2,451
French and Belgians - - - -	413	253	492	654
Russian and Finlanders - - -	735	1,310	1,726	3,759
Hungarians - - - - - - -	276	370	546	1,048
Austrians - - - - - - -	131	155	228	320
Miscellaneous Nationalities- - -	11,377	1,941	8,924	7,902
Totals - -	44,543	23,895	49,149	67,379

Increase of Population of Canada.

MR. D. A. THOMAS: To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if he can state the rate of increase in the population of the Dominion of Canada between 1891 and 1901, and how it compares with the rate of increase in Great Britain during the same period.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Chamberlain.*) The increase in the population of the Dominion of Canada in the 10 years 1891 to 1901 was 11·14 per cent. The increase in the population of the United Kingdom during the same period was 9·9 per cent.

Decrease of Birth Rate in Australia and New Zealand.

MR. D. A. THOMAS: To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if he has any official information showing whether the continuous decrease in the birth rates in Australia and New Zealand from 38 and 40 per thousand respectively in 1871 to 27 and 26 respectively in 1901 is due to circumstances peculiar to those colonies; and if he can state the corresponding birth rates in the Dominion of Canada in 1871 and 1901.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Chamberlain.*) I have no official information as to the causes to which the decline in the birth rate of the Australian Colonies and New Zealand is due. There are no complete statistics as to the birth rate in Canada. One of the provinces has no registry of births and deaths.

Imports into Canada.

SIR WILLIAM HARCOURT (Monmouthshire, W.): To ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade, what was the value of dutiable goods imported into Canada for home consumption for the year 1902 under the general tariff, from Great Britain, the United States, Germany, France, Belgium, and Holland: from Great Britain under the preferential tariff: and, what was the value of all iron and steel, manufactured and unmanufactured, imported from Great Britain into Canada in the years 1900 and 1901; and what was the amount of bounty paid upon iron in Canada in the years 1897 and 1901.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) The value of dutiable goods imported into Canada for consumption in the year 1901-2 under the general tariff from the countries named was as follows: Great Britain, £1,301,614; United States, £12,370,705; Germany, £1,866,116; France, £1,140,191; Belgium, £295,351; Holland, £105,507. From Great Britain under the preferential tariff, £5,905,691. The value of iron and steel, manufactured and unmanufactured, imported from Great

Britain in 1899–1900 was £1,178,144; in 1900–1901, £699,556; in 1901–02, £1,314,727. The bounties on iron and steel paid by the Canadian Government in 1886–7 amounted to £20,543; in 1900–1901, to £96,204.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Somali Operations.—Stopping Power of Bullets.

MR. ARTHUR LEE (Hampshire, Fareham): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War, what action he proposes to take with reference to General Manning's official report, that the present service ammunition has little stopping power, and that in a fanatical rush of savages a heavier bullet, or one with greater stopping power, is very requisite.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): Ammunition possessing greater stopping power than the service ammunition has been sent to Somaliland.

Canada and Irish Home Rule.

MR. JOSEPH DEVLIN (Kilkenny, N.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies, whether he is aware that resolutions in favour of Home Rule for Ireland were recently adopted in the Canadian Parliament: and, if so, whether he will place a copy of these resolutions upon the Table of the House.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN, Birmingham, W): I suppose the hon. Member refers in his Question to an Address to the Crown passed by the Canadian Parliament in favour of Home Rule for Ireland. There is no objection to laying a copy of it on the Table of the House.

MR. J. DEVLIN suggested that the Cabinet should, in view of the importance of colonial opinion, extend their inquiry to the question of Home Rule for Ireland.

Kobé Consular Report.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, if he will state when the Kobé Consular Report is likely to be issued; and will arrangements be made for the Report to be issued earlier in the year in future.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Lord CRANBORNE, Rochester): Since the Question was put upon the Paper the Report has been issued. The date of issue must in a measure depend upon the date on which the Returns are available from which the figures are compiled.

Soudan Civil Service.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether there is any kind of examination for candidates desirous of entering the service of the Government of the Soudan; and, if not, will he direct the Governor-General to arrange for some educational test, especially as regards a knowledge of Arabic.

LORD CRANBORNE: There is at present no examination for candidates desirous of entering the service of the Government of the Soudan. The matter is under consideration.

United States Sugar.

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether, in view of the statement on page 11 of the Findings of the Permanent Commission, that the United States sends us no bountied sugar, his attention has been directed to the fact that 23,000 cwts. of sugar was received last year from the United States, that bounties upon sugar cultivation and production have been given in the United States for thirteen years past, having been initiated at the same time as the countervailing duties on foreign bountied sugar, and that details of sugar bounties given in the State of New York are given in the Consular Report for that district; and, if so, whether he will say if any communications have taken place between the Government and the Government of the United States on the possibility that American sugar may be prohibited from entry if the Sugar Convention Bill came into force; and, if so, whether he will lay them upon the Table.

LORD CRANBORNE: I see no reason to doubt the correctness of the statement referred to in the Question as to the amount of sugar received last year from the United States. His Majesty's Government are not aware of any evidence that it was bounty-fed, but the decision whether or not sugar exported from any country is bounty-fed lies with the Brussels Commission, and in the absence of any such finding no action is called for on the part of His Majesty's Government, and no communications have passed between the two Governments.

American Shoe Trade.

MR. LEVY (Leicestershire, Loughborough): I beg to ask the President of the Board of Trade whether his attention has been directed to the statement in the Consular Report on the Trade of the United States that the United States attribute the decrease in their shoe trade to the fact that British manufacturers are able to obtain American machinery from the United States cheaper than the Americans themselves can buy it on the spot; and, if so, will this fact be brought to the attention of those holding the inquiry into the fiscal system of this country.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central): I have seen the statement in question. Points of this nature will of course be borne in mind.

Stornoway Fishermen's Dwellings.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether, seeing that the proprietor of the Island of Lewis has not yet come to terms with the applicants for feus for fishermen's dwellings near Stornoway, he will state what steps the Congested Districts Board propose to take in the matter.

THE SOLICITOR GENERAL FOR SCOTLAND (Mr. SCOTT DICKSON, Glasgow, Bridgton): The Congested Districts Board's last information was that feus to be taken up by each applicant had not yet been arranged but were not expected to present much difficulty of adjustment. The matter is primarily one between the superior and the feuars: but the Board will make further inquiry as to the reason for delay.

MR. WEIR: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware that the same state of things has been going on for the past twelve years?

MR. SCOTT DICKSON: No, Sir.

South Uist Crofters.

MR. JOHN DEWAR (Inverness): I beg to ask the Lord Advocate whether the promised inquiry into the condition of the crofters and cottars in South Uist is now proceeding; and, if so, when the Report may be expected to be issued.

MR. SCOTT DICKSON: As the hon. Member is aware, the district referred to in the Question has been the subject of anxious and careful consideration by the Secretary for Scotland early in the present year. The Secretary for Scotland had given instructions some time ago for a special inquiry into some matters brought under his notice, but before it could take place letters arrived containing distinct threats of unlawful action, and the Secretary for Scotland felt compelled, though with reluctance, to suspend for a time the instruction he had given. It is his intention to allow the inquiry to take place at a suitable time, but he is unable to give any assurance in regard either to the date when the inquiry will be held or when the Report may be expected. I am to add that a good deal will depend on the attitude adopted by those in the island who have endeavoured by threats to secure compliance with their wishes.

Westminster Abbey.

MR. CHANNING, (Northamptonshire, E.): I beg to ask the hon. Member for West Derbyshire, as representing the First Commissioner of Works, whether he has considered the proposals of the Ecclesiastical Commissioners to demolish the old residential quarter immediately south of Westminster Abbey and Deanery Garden, with a view to selling the sites for important commercial buildings; and whether, having regard to the undesirability and risk of erecting lofty buildings close to the Abbey, His Majesty's Government will make representations to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, or take other steps to prevent this proposal from being carried out.

MR. VICTOR CAVENDISH (Derbyshire, W.): This is a matter which does not come within the jurisdiction of the First Commissioner of Works. But he would strongly deprecate any building scheme which might impair the safety or amenity of the Abbey.

MR. CHANNING: Has the Commissioner of Works no power over the height of buildings adjacent to such a building as Westminster Abbey.

MR. VICTOR CAVENDISH: I am afraid not. I can add nothing to my answer.

Dublin Golf Club.

MR. DELANY (Queen's Co., Ossory): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been drawn to the sale in the Land Judge's Court of a portion of the North Bull to the trustees of the Dublin Golf Club, and, if so, whether, seeing that this portion of land has been used as public recreation ground, will he take steps to prevent it falling into the hands of private owners.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. WYNDHAM, Dover): I am informed that the property in question is and always has been private property. The Golf Club have no intention, I understand, of preventing the public from using, as a recreation ground, the portion of the North Bull acquired by the Club.

Ballincollig Royal Powder Mills, Cork.

MR. SHEEHAN (Cork Co., Mid): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the Ballincollig Royal Powder Mills, County Cork, have been closed since 30th June, and that in consequence a number of workmen have been thrown out of employment and are at present threatened with eviction from their cottages and plots of land; and if so, seeing that the present proprietors do not intend to reopen the mills, will he recommend to the proper authorities the desirability of negotiating for their purchase with a view to having them taken over and worked by the Government.

MR. WYNDHAM: I have communicated this Question to the War Department, and am informed that it does not require to purchase any powder mills.

Irish National School Teachers.

MR. FLYNN (Cork Co., N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state how many teachers in the service of the Commissioners of National Education, who are officially registered as first division of first class, are precluded by the seventy average (Rule 195 J) from attaining the maximum salary attached to the first section of the first grade; how many of these teachers are, as at present circumstanced, debarred from receiving any increments to their present salaries, as indicated in Rule 200, Section 2 (c); and whether, seeing that such teachers have been promoted to that class as a reward for efficiency and scholarship, as well as for long service, he will direct the attention of the Commissioners to their alleged grievances.

MR. WYNDHAM: I am informed by the Commissioners that there are 142 principal teachers registered under the old regulations as in the first division of the first class, who, owing to the fact that there is not an average attendance of seventy pupils at the national schools in which they are serving, cannot receive the maximum salary prescribed for first divison of the first grade teachers, and cannot receive any increments to their present salaries. These and other first division of first class teachers who are serving in smaller schools have no grievances under the new system of payments. The first grade *income* under the new system is an entirely different thing from first class *salary* under the old regulations.

MR. FLYNN: Will the right hon. Gentleman communicate with the Commissioners and point out the undesirability of the placing these Civil servants in a worse position in regard to promotion than other Civil servants?

MR. WYNDHAM: I understand that they are not labouring under any such grievance.

Irish Housing Question.

MR. NANNETTI (Dublin, College Green): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to the fact that the Housing Bill of the President of the Local Government Board, about to be introduced as a Government measure, does not extend to Ireland; and whether it is the intention of the Government to also introduce a measure dealing with the question of the housing of the working classes in Ireland.

MR. WYNDHAM: The reply to the first part of the Question is in the affirmative. As already stated, it is my intention during the autumn to consider the whole question of the housing of the labouring classes in Ireland.

MR. NANNETTI: When the right hon. Gentleman refers to the housing of the labouring classes does he mean the working classes generally?

MR. WYNDHAM: The questions are somewhat germane. We had better take a view of the whole field.

MR. SHEEHAN: Will that include the housing of the working classes in cities and towns?

MR. WYNDHAM: I cannot give any pledges. I have said the whole subject will be considered, but I cannot go into details.

Sligo and the Congested Districts Board.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN (Kilkenny): On behalf of the hon. Member for South Sligo, I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in view of the fact that since its formation the Congested Districts Board have expended the sum of £86,025 in the counties of Donegal, Mayo, and Galway, whilst only £2,183 have been given to Sligo, and that applications for grants from Sligo have recently been refused by that body, steps will be taken to have a representative from Sligo on the Congested Districts Board.

MR. WYNDHAM: The figures quoted represent expenditure on engineering works only. There is no vacancy at present on the Board.

Sligo Constabulary Office.

MR. PATRICK O'BRIEN: On behalf of the hon. Member for South Sligo, I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in view of the fact that extra clerks have been employed during the past eighteen months in the office of the County Inspector, Royal Irish Constabulary, at Sligo, he will state whether this extra staff, which includes a detective sergeant, is still continued; and, if so, will he state the nature of their duties and the amount payable by the ratepayers for their maintenance.

MR. WYNDHAM: One additional constable clerk has been employed. His services are still required. The extra expense involved is borne by the Constabulary Vote.

Enniskillen Prison.

MR. EDWARD MITCHELL (Fermanagh, N.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland why the County Fermanagh Grand Jury were asked at last Assizes to appoint visiting justices to the disused Enniskillen prison, and why they were not asked to appoint visiting justices to the prison where Fermanagh prisoners are sent.

MR. WYNDHAM: The request, I am informed, was made by inadvertence. The representation of the County Fermanagh Grand Jury on the Visiting Committee of the Sligo prison will be duly provided for.

Lismore Rural Council and the Crimes Act.

MR. O'SHEE (Waterford, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he has received a copy of a resolution of the Lismore Rural Council urging the repeal of the Criminal Law and Procedure (Ireland) Act, 1887, and resolutions of other public bodies in Ireland to the same effect; and, if so, whether he will undertake to consider the subject with a view to legislation in the next session of Parliament in the sense indicated.

MR. WYNDHAM: Yes, Sir; resolutions to this effect have been received. The question raised is one of policy upon which I have no statement to make.

Lloyd Apjohn Property, County Limerick.

MR. LUNDON (Limerick, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland what progress has been made with the sale to the tenants of the Lloyd Apjohn property in the parish of Grean, county Limerick; and whether it will now be carried out under the Purchase Acts hitherto prevailing, or under the Purchase Act foreshadowed in the Bill at present before Parliament.

MR. WYNDHAM: On Thursday last the Land Judge expressed dissatisfaction at the non-settlement of the rental of the estate and adjourned the proceedings until November. He also announced that if the rental was not completed by November he would transfer the charge of the estate to another solicitor.

MR. KILBRIDE (Kildare S.): Who is responsible for this unsatisfactory position of affairs?

MR. WYNDHAM: I infer some delay was due to the solicitor.

Policemen as Clerks of Petty Sessions.

MR. MACVEAGH (Down, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that the rules for the appointment of clerks of petty sessions provide that policemen and others up to the age of fifty years are eligible to compete, whilst civilians over the age of forty years are disqualified; and, if so, whether he will take steps to either raise the limit for all candidates, or to place policemen on a level with candidates who have not been in receipt of public money.

MR. WYNDHAM: The age limit of fifty years applies also to civilians, such as practising barristers, solicitors, clerks, and justices of the peace. These persons and retired officers of the constabulary possess a special knowledge of the duties of petty sessions clerk, and the limit was designedly extended to secure their services. It is not proposed to raise the limit in the case of other persons not so qualified.

MR. MACVEAGH: Is it the opinion of the right hon. Gentleman that a policeman past the age of fifty years is fit to become a petty sessions clerk?

MR. WYNDHAM: Under the maximum of fifty, yes.

Irish Development Grant.

MR. MURPHY (Kerry, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether in apportioning the money available under the Irish Development Grant for different purposes, the views of public bodies and others in reference to primary education and economic development will receive consideration as well as the views of those in official positions.

MR. WYNDHAM: Certainly.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): Is it not the fact that this money cannot be allocated without the consent of Parliament?

MR. WYNDHAM'S reply was inaudible.

Irish Industrial Inquiry.

DR. AMBROSE (Mayo, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that a Select Committee was appointed in the Session 1884–5 to inquire into the natural resources and the present condition of manufacturing and productive industries in Ireland, and to report how those natural resources may be more fully developed, and how those industries may be encouraged and extended; and that the Committee was unable in the time at their disposal to take sufficient evidence to enable them to agree upon specific recommendations, but recommended that a Committee be appointed in the next session of Parliament to continue the inquiry; and, if so, whether, in view of the importance of such inquiry and its bearing on the future prospects of Ireland, he will see that the Committee is re-appointed.

MR. WYNDHAM: It is not intended, nor is it necessary, to re-appoint the Committee of 1885. The Recess Committee has since made a special study of the industrial position and needs of Ireland. The results of their investigations have been published. The Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction, created by the Act of 1899, has been furnished with funds and machinery for the purpose of carrying out such inquiries, and is constantly engaged, through its experts and with the aid of advisory committees representative of particular industries, in conducting investigations much more direct and definite than would be possible by a Parliamentary Committee. The Department has already published the results of much of the economic information so far acquired, and is constantly supplementing these publications.

Queen's County Jury Panel.

MR. MACVEAGH: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been directed to the fact that the name of a juror rated at over £100 has been struck off the special jury panel of Queen's County by the rate collector without direction from the Judge of Assize or Revising Barrister; and, if so, will he state under what authority the rate collector so acted.

MR. WYNDHAM: If the hon. Member will forward me the name I will inquire.

Crofters' Holdings (Scotland) Act (1886) Amendment Bill.

MR. WEIR: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he has yet considered the advisability of giving facilities for the Crofters' Holdings (Scotland) Act (1886) Amendment Bill, the object of which is to extend the benefits of the Crofters Act, 1886, to small tenants holding under leasein the crofting counties.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.) was understood to say he could hold out no hope to the hon. Member on the matter.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs) asked as to the course of business.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I hope I may take after twelve o'clock to-night the Report of the Sugar Convention (Expenses and Duties) Resolution; Board of Agriculture and Fisheries Bill, Second Reading; Poor Law (Dissolution of School Districts and Adjustments) Bill, Third Reading; Public Buildings Expenses Bill, Second Reading; Ireland Development Grant Bill, consideration as amended; Naval Works Bill, Third Reading; and Patriotic Fund Bill, Committee. There are certain Supplementary Estimates which we must take after twelve o'clock in order to comply with the Standing Order; but these, I believe, are quite uncontroversial.

MR. BUCHANAN (Perthshire, E.): Can the right hon. Gentleman say as to Wednesday and Friday?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No, it is impossible to foresee the exact course of the business.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: When is Supply to be closed?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Thursday is the penultimate day.

MR. FLYNN: Will the Government give any facilities for the Butter Bill, to which so much time has been devoted?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I am afraid I cannot give any promise of that kind.

PATENT OFFICE (EXTENSION) BILL.

Reported from the Select Committee with Minutes of Evidence.

Minutes of Proceedings to be printed. [No. 308.]

Report to lie upon the Table and to be printed. [No. 308.]

Bill, as amended, re-committed to a Committee of the Whole House for to-morrow, and to be printed. [Bill 308.]

LIGHT RAILWAYS BILL [LORDS].

Read the first time; to be read a second time to-morrow, and to be printed. [Bill 309.]

NEW BILL.

LIQUOR SELLERS' LIABILITY BILL.

"To provide for the payment of compensation by sellers of liquor in certain cases," presented by Sir Wilfrid Lawson; supported by Mr. T. W. Russell; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 310.]

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (SUPPLY).

Ordered, That the Civil Service Supplementary Estimates, 1903–4 (New Services), and Army Excess Vote, 1901–2, may be considered in Committee of Supply at this evening's Sitting after midnight.—(*Mr. A. J. Balfour.*)

SUPPLY [21ST ALLOTTED DAY].

(Considered in Committee.)

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. JEFFREYS (Hampshire, N.) in the Chair.]

ARMY ESTIMATES, 1903–4.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £6,895,000, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the charge for provisions, forage, and other supplies, including South African compensation claims, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1904."

***COLONEL LEGGE** (St. George's, Hanover Square) moved to reduce the Vote by £100. He said the recruits of the Army were not fed as well as the trained soldiers, who had an extra 3d. per day messing allowance. This extra allowance the recruit was not allowed to have until he was nineteen years of age, or had what was called the physical equivalent of that age, and even then he must have served six months and given evidence of satisfactory progress. It was very hard on him, because at the time he entered the Army he was usually underfed; he had, moreover, to work hard and constantly, and was at a time of life when food was most necessary to him. The Secretary for War two years ago had said that the matter had been carefully considered, but that it would appear that there was no justification for relaxing the regulations. He regarded that answer as satisfactory, because had he been merely told that the matter was under consideration he would have been perfectly hopeless, because when once a question reached that stage in the War Office nothing more was ever heard about it. Now, however, he hoped that the right hon. Gentleman would be able to hold out some hope that, if not immediately, at any rate next year he would be able to see his way to relax the regulations and give the recruit the increased food which he so urgently required.

Motion made and Question proposed, "That Item A (Cost of Provisions) be reduced by £100."—(*Colonel Legge.*)

***SIR CHARLES DILKE** (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean) said this question had been frequently before the House during the last two years. The food of the Army was still inferior in quantity to the food of the Navy, which, however, had recently been increased as a result of the Report of a recent inquiry, and he believed the greatest difficulty in the way of recruiting at present was the smaller quantity of food given in the Army. He entirely endorsed, therefore, the remarks of his hon. and gallant friend. There was another matter which certainly ought to be looked into by the Committee. They had recently had the question raised of the destruction of rations in South Africa, and also as to the quality of the rations supplied. With reference to this question a book had just been published which deserved attention. He referred to Sir Wodehouse Richardson's recent book, "With the Army Service Corps in South Africa." Sir Wodehouse Richardson, who was the principal officer of the Army Service Corps in South Africa, gave the real dates of the mobilisation of the expeditionary force, which were very different from the dates given to that House, and dealing with rations, said that 20,000,000 lbs. of preserved meat and vegetable rations passed under his surveillance. The following entry appeared in his diary—

> "Meat and vegetable rations. A large proportion of those sent to South Africa were found to be unfit for consumption."

After such a statement from so high an authority he thought an explanation should be given by the Government on the subject. He was aware that it was alleged on behalf of those who supplied the rations that the goods were damaged —wilfully or carelessly—before they were tested, by persons in Government employ, but certainly this was a matter on which they ought to press the Government for a clear statement of the confession which had come into their possession.

MR. ARTHUR LEE (Hampshire, Fareham) supported the appeal which had been made in favour of an improvement in the rations of the private soldier. He did not go so far as to say that it was necessary the youngest recruits should have exactly the same full ration as the full fighting man, but still there was room for improvement. He wished mainly to point out that the private soldier did not object so much to the food itself as to the way in which it was prepared and served, and he suggested that some little expense might be incurred in providing the men with proper utensils. It was not calculated to encourage decent men to join the Army to compel them to take their liquid nourishment out of an earthenware bowl.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): A mug.

MR. ARTHUR LEE said the right hon. Gentleman might call it a mug but it had no handle, and it was very unpopular in the Army. Why not provide the soldiers with some more decent method of consuming their rations? Let them have the ordinary appendages of civilised feeding. It would not involve very great expense, but it would remove a serious grievance which certainly had a tendency to discourage recruiting.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.) said he had addressed several Questions to the Secretary for War on the question of the destruction of rations at Pretoria, and he would now like to know the result of the right hon. Gentleman's communications with South Africa on the subject. This was an extremely serious matter. Something like £80,000 worth of rations were declared to be unfit and were ordered to be destroyed. In view of the appalling amount of distress which existed in all parts of the country—in view of the hundreds of thousands of people actually in a state of starvation—or verging upon starvation, it was a horrible thing to read that £80,000 worth of the rations paid for by the taxpayers of the country had had to be destroyed as if they were so much rubbish in South Africa. The matter called for the most searching inquiry on the part of the Government. When he first put the Question he had not the faintest idea of the names of the firms who supplied the rations, nor did he think that that was a matter which concerned a private Member. It was one rather for the War Office. He now had information of a more or less reliable character that, as a matter of fact, a great portion of these rations were not really bad or unfit for human consumption when they were destroyed, and that quantities were eaten by the people of the locality without the slightest ill-effects. Remembering how thousands of people in this country and especially in Ireland found it difficult to find food for their children, he desired to know what means were taken to determine whether these rations were good or not, whether those means were such as to satisfy the authorities in South Africa that they were really bad, and whether any rumour had reached the Secretary of State to the effect that a large portion of these rations were hastily assumed to be unfit food. It was most deplorable and regrettable that food unfit for consumption should be sent out for our men who were risking their lives on the battle field, but it was almost criminal if food which was not unfit to be eaten had been destroyed in such vast quantities. They ought to have a frank and full statement from the Government on the subject.

*COLONEL BLUNDELL (Lancashire, Ince) supported the suggestion that larger rations should be given to recruits, especially when drill and gymnastic exercises are being carried on together. It might be done with ease at recruit training depôts like Caterham, and with a little trouble he should think the difficulty could be overcome in regiments where the recruits mess with soldiers who have passed their drill.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE WAR OFFICE (Lord STANLEY, Lancashire, Westhoughton) said he would answer the hon. and gallant Member for St. George's, Hanover Square, at once. He had complained that the recruit had not the same messing facilities as the trained soldier. He would ask the hon. and gallant Member to make a comparison between the position of the trained soldier in 1895 and at the present time. In 1895 the trained soldier had 1s. per day and 3d. for messing. The recruit had precisely the same conditions now as the trained soldier had in 1895. Nine months after he reached the age of nineteen he now got 3d. for messing allowance and 2d. for stoppages. He thought the man who was serving his apprenticeship should be compelled to find something towards the education which was being given to him in order to fit him for his career. As they had done much to increase the pay of the soldier, and as next year there would come into force a still further payment from the State to the soldier, they hesitated about putting upon the country a still further burden by supplying the recruit with the extra money which would put him into the same position as the trained soldier. They were justified in saying that while he was a recruit he should be considered as serving his apprenticeship, and should be required to purchase any extra provisions he required, other than those allowed by the State. He agreed that it was desirable that, as far as possible, the recruit should be well fed, but he thought he should be required to find a certain amount of the extra nourishment while he was a recruit and not a trained soldier.

With regard to the destruction of provisions in South Africa he would lay the whole case before the House. In the first place, the right hon. Gentleman had quoted a paragraph from a book written by Colonel Richardson. He did not know whether that book had been issued to the public or whether it had been published for private circulation, but he had not had the privilege of seeing it. He had made inquiries since that paragraph was read, and he could not find that Colonel Richardson had ever made any complaint officially to the War Office similar to that which he had put into his book, which was written after he had left the Army. He could not help saying that this was rather hard upon those who were trying to meet the objections which were being put forward as the results of the late war. The purchase of preserved meat for South Africa was supervised in the following way. At nearly all the contractors' manufactories they had men expressly placed, not only to inspect the meat when it was being put into the tins but also to inspect it before it was prepared ready to put into the tins, and they were given full power to reject in any and every way anything which they thought undesirable. The goods when supplied were forwarded, for trans-shipment to South Africa, to Woolwich, and there the War Office had again inspectors who not only took out tins from any consignment for examination, but they also sent samples to the public analyst to be analysed not only for the quality but also for any deterioration of the contents of the tins, and an inspection of the tins and the material of the tins. There was not one single complaint from the analyst that either the tins or the meat were anything but what was considered up to the specification, and those were the most stringent conditions they could put upon any manufacturer. Therefore, he thought the Committee would hold that the War Office did all it possibly could to secure for the troops in South Africa and other places that when it left this country the preserved meat should be in the best condition that they could devise for preservation and for the use of the troops. In a matter like this the Committee should allow some line to be drawn between the responsibility of the War Office at home and the responsibility of those on the spot. As far as the War Office were concerned their sole duty must be, and should be, to try and get the best article, and be perfectly certain that the best article went out from this country in as perfect a condition as supervision could possibly secure. He maintained that the War Office did that. With regard to the destruction of the provisions in South Africa, he candidly confessed that he wished that more careful inspection had been made of those goods before they were summarily disposed of by the general officer in command. Reports came to him that, owing to the deterioration of the preserved rations, it was suspected that there was a certain amount of illness amongst the troops. He thereupon assembled a board, who took a percentage of the rations still in store, examined them, and on these examinations it was reported that the rations were in a state which necessitated their destruction. Upon that report the general officer commanding ordered the destruction of the whole lot.

The hon. Member for East Clare had asked him a Question as to whether he had heard rumour that some of these rations ordered to be destroyed were taken away by the natives and eaten by them, and that no ill consequences arose. He was not perfectly certain that a thing which agreed with a native would always agree with an European, and therefore that argument did not weigh very much with him. The hon. Member for North Aberdeen read out a letter in the House in which it was stated that the natives had taken away some of this preserved meat, that they had eaten it, and that it had done them no harm. In this matter they had to place themselves in the position of the general officer commanding. He assembled a board which reported that the rations ought to be destroyed, and he had them destroyed. Even if he had a doubt in his own mind that some of those rations were not as bad as the report of the samples made out, he had to consider whether it was worth the risk, in order merely to preserve perhaps an infinitesimal number of the rations, to risk the health of the troops under his command. That being so he accepted the responsibility which, personally, he wished he had accepted after a closer examination of the rations themselves; but, after all, it was a responsibility in regard to which the House generally would hold that he exercised the wisest discretion in his power, and did what he thought was best for the troops under his command. He destroyed those rations, and there now arose the question of responsibility for their replacing, or any fine in lieu of replacement, a question which must be dealt with by them and by those who destroyed the rations. If there was any case where they could find negligence or shortcomings on the part of a contractor they would not allow him to escape from any liability. The House must understand that in these matters hon. Members must discriminate to a certain extent between rations so destroyed in time of peace and rations destroyed in time of war. He said that more especially now, because with regard to these rations they had not previously had any complaint, nor did he find that the men who had the same kind of rations had ever made any formal complaint about them. It was a big trade and one which they must not depreciate except on the fairest grounds and after the closest examination. He therefore asked the House to realise that a tin of meat which might be perfectly good for two years when properly stored had not the same chance of deteriorating as the tins which had to go to the Tropics and be stored in all sorts of places, in all weathers, without shelter, sometimes in the damp, and sometimes in the blazing sun. Under those circumstances the meat had not the same chance as when stored at home. Some allowance must, therefore, be made for the conditions under which these provisions were stored, and possibly those were some of the various causes which might have helped the deterioration of these particular rations. At the same time they were making further inquiries into the matter. They had telegraphed for further particulars which had to be cleared up before they could deal with the manufacturers, but he repeated that, as far as they were concerned, they knew and believed that the provisions left this country in an absolutely good condition, and, as far as any legal rights they had got in regard to compensation were concerned, they were perfectly prepared and intended to insist upon them being upheld.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.) said the noble Lord had just stated that the Government were still making inquiries, but he had made one admission which completely justified the action taken by those who had drawn attention to this matter. He had said that he considered that the general officer who ordered the destruction of these goods did so before he had made a good and sufficient inquiry. That was a serious statement and it put on the War Office the responsibility of taking some action with regard to the officers who ordered the destruction of tens of thousands of pounds worth of property without a sufficiently exhaustive inquiry. The noble Lord made another statement which, he thought,

ought to shift the ground of the inquiry, to some extent, from that altogether. The noble Lord said they were inquiring as to the responsibility of the contractors and that they had not come to a conclusion. That was so far satisfactory, but he wished to know whether the noble Lord would make an inquiry as to the officers. The noble Lord stated that the most scrupulous examination imaginable was made of the goods before they left England; first of all they were inspected while in the process of manufacturing, and secondly at Woolwich before they were shipped. Within a few months of the examination by these officers they were again examined by another set of officers in Pretoria, and whereas the officers at the factories and at Woolwich passed the goods as perfectly sound, the other officers condemned them as bad. That was an extraordinary state of affairs. He thought the War Office were bound to inquire very closely into the suitability of the officers who made these inquiries, both in South Africa and in England, because to most people it would seem a very unlikely thing that goods which were passed in England should, within a few months, be condemned in South Africa. The presumption was that one of these two sets of officers did not do their duty. The noble Lord said that allowance must be made for climatic considerations, but that, he thought, would not hold water for a single moment. He believed that the contractors themselves, if they were asked, would repudiate the idea that any climatic influences could have such an effect upon tinned goods of this description, if they were properly tinned. There was no reason why they should be exposed to the sun in Pretoria. The noble Lord would find, if he inquired, what they all knew, that the serious part of this matter was that a large portion of the goods were examined and condemned within a few months of their arrival in South Africa. That was an unusual state of affairs. One could understand tins which had been knocking about for years in all kinds of weather and places deteriorating, but the serious matter was that many of the tins which were ordered to be destroyed had only just arrived in South Africa. Were the two sets of officers who made the examination to be passed by scot free? Was there to be no inquiry as to their fitness? Were the Committee to be told their names, and were they medical men? What process did they put the food under in order to examine it? This was as serious a matter almost as any case that might be made out with reference to the culpability of the contractors themselves. There must be fault and blame somewhere, and he would ask the noble Lord to say whether careful inquiry would be made, not only with regard to the contractors, but the officers. The noble Lord had said that this was the first time complaints had been made with regard to rations of this description. He heard the statement with a little surprise, because the information he had received did not tally with it. Did the noble lord say now that, outside of these rations which were destroyed in Pretoria a few months ago, no complaint had been made with reference to any of the rations supplied either to the Army or the Navy? He had received a contrary statement, and he should be very glad to hear that it was not true.

MR. MALCOLM (Suffolk, Stowmarket) joined the hon. Member for East Clare in expressing surprise at the statement made by the noble Lord that the tinned meat destroyed at Pretoria was the first lot of which he had heard any complaint. He remembered that a couple of years ago he wrote to the War Office on behalf of some canteen contractors whose goods were returned from Cape Town. He thought that a word from the noble Lord would rehabilitate some of the canteen contractors who had smarted a good deal under the condemnation they suffered. He asked the Secretary of State for War two years ago whether there were any contracts for canned meats going to Canadian contractors because he knew that there were a great many going to American contractors. His right hon. friend informed him that the Canadian contract goods were very inferior indeed, and that some of them had to be returned to Canada. He then made some representations to the Colonial Office because it seemed to him very hard that the Canadian contractors should be excluded altogether, perhaps on account of the wrongdoing of two or three contractors in Canada. He understood that when the goods were sent back to Canada a small committee examined them, and the report that reached him was that they found there had been some considerable mistake. A great many of the packages had never been opened, and they were quite as good when returned to Montreal as when they were sent out. There was naturally a good deal of soreness felt by the Canadian contractors who thought they had not, on the whole, been very well treated as compared with American contractors who had done nothing at all for us in the course of the war. He wished to know whether it was under some misapprehension that these goods were returned.

*COLONEL LEGGE said that the matter now before the Committee was a question of money, but so far as the soldiers were concerned, it was a question of food and not of pay. Every soldier paid 3d. per day out of his pay towards extra messing, and in addition to that the old soldier got this messing allowance of 3d. per day, but it did not go into his pocket at all. The old soldier got the benefit of extra messing which the recruit did not get. Three years ago he was commanding a reserve regiment, and it so happened that there were not enough old soldiers to form the regiment. He had 200 old soldiers and 300 recruits. These 200 were ex-soldiers, who came back to serve with the colours in response to the appeals which were made, and they received their extra messing allowance. In a good many cases their waist measurement was considerably larger than their chest measurement, but with the recruits the measurements were the other way. It was the recruits who wanted the extra messing, and he hoped his right hon. friend would do something to meet this requirement.

*MR. MACONOCHIE (Aberdeenshire, E.) said he was surprised to hear the statement made by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Forest of Dean, about tinned rations for the Army. He had the pleasure of meeting Sir Wodehouse Richardson, whom the right hon. Gentleman quoted, at his request, and particularly discussed the question of meat rations. His words to him were to the effect that he had had considerable practical experience of Maconochie's tinned rations, and that he found they were perfectly satisfactory. He said that what he desired was a square tin and a better method of opening it than by knife. The hon. Member did not think that this discussion, whatever might come out of it, would be for the benefit of the manufacturers of this country or the working classes, unless they could show that it was no new thing for this ration to be praised and not blamed, and that it had been in use for many years. The *Times* correspondent, writing from Merawi in September, 1897, said—

> "It is fortunate that officers and correspondents are not dependent on this country for provisions. We came up well supplied with stores, and ni my opinion a Maconochie Army ration of tinned beef or mutton is far more palatable than the fresh meat we purchase here."

On February 12th, 1897, referring to the Ashanti expedition, the *Allahabad Pioneer* stated—

> "Maconochie field rations, which I think I have mentioned to you before, have gained golden opinions in the late Ashanti expedition."

The *British Medical Journal*, the *Daily Chronicle*, the *Lancet*, the *Daily News* and the *Pioneer* bore testimony to similar effect. The hon. Member said he had a host of extracts from letters of soldiers at the front praising this particular form of food. Under these circumstances, he thought it was only fair to ask that the manufacturers should be given the benefit of the doubt and not be condemned when there was not a single service Member in the House, who was at the war, who had not expressed appreciation of the Maconochie Army ration.

SIR ELLIOTT LEES (Birkenhead) asked whether arrangements could be made for rations being put up in smaller tins than was done during the last war. It was very inconvenient to have seven-pound tins of rations, and smaller quantities would be more serviceable.

LORD STANLEY said his hon. friend had mentioned this matter of the size of rations as soon as he came back from South Africa, and he was glad to be able to state that steps would be taken to ensure that they would be made up in smaller quantities in future. In regard to the remarks of his hon. friend the Member for Stowmarket, in regard to canned meat obtained from Canada, he had to say that this meat was condemned by the officers appointed by Lord Kitchener who examined it at Cape Town. The committee were not satisfied. The sample was divided into two parts —one being sent to Woolwich and the other to Montreal for examination. Professsor Robertson of Canada was allowed to be present at the examination. At Montreal they were satisfied that the meat was quite good. At Woolwich, which, after all, was the place which must know more about the matter, they were not at all satisfied. They said that the meat was not good, that it was composed in great part of gristle and they unhesitatingly condemmed the sample. In that respect it might be said that those who were unbiassed at home confirmed the opinion of those in South Africa, and that as a matter of fact the officers appointed by Lord Kitchener were perfectly right. In saying that unless there was a distinct improvement they could not continue employing these Canadian firms whose goods had been condemned, it must be understood that where Canadian contractors endeavoured to act up to the War Office specification there would be every inclination to give them the same opportunity for contracting as was given to foreign countries. Therefore, there was not the slightest bias on the part of the War Office against the Canadian manufacturers. In regard to what was said as to making the meals of the soldiers more palatable in the sense of affording improved accommodation, they were doing what they said in the way of providing separate dining rooms and in making the dinner more of a real dinner and less of a picnic than formerly. It had improved, and if there was a way of improving it farther without involving large expense on the nation, he would be only too glad to receive any proposals and recommend them for approval. He thought that the hon. Member for Clare had misconstrued his words. What the hon. Member said was that he was not satisfied that there had been a sufficiently good inquiry. What he had said was that he could have wished that there had been a larger percentage than one per cent., but that they did not know what other reasons—there might have been many—influenced the committee in the decision they arrived at. In regard to what the hon. Member said about officers not doing their duty, he could not, in any way, agree with it.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND said he did not say that the officers did not do their duty. He only asked the noble Lord whether an inquiry would be held into the unusual fact that, whereas one set of officers at Woolwich and the factories said that the goods were perfectly good and sound, another set of officers in South Africa decided exactly the reverse. There must be something wrong there.

Lord STANLEY said that that did not at all follow. It must be remembered that a few months intervened between the two examinations, during which there was every sort of change of climate, atmosphere and condition. It might be a matter for consideration whether the War Office requirements as to the goods being manufactured with sufficient care, so as to preserve the meat during these months and provide against all changes of climate which might intervene, had been fulfilled.

Mr. WILLIAM REDMOND asked for how long these tinned rations were expected to hold good; whether any guarantee as to length of time was given with them; or whether they were bought on the understanding that within a few months under such conditions they might be expected to turn bad.

Lord STANLEY said that there was a guarantee for two years, and that was what made him say that he thought there might be a legal liability to make good the loss on the part of the manufacturers. He was not in a position to state fully when these tins did arrive in South Africa. He might ease the minds of those who thought that these preserved rations were neither good nor palatable by saying that his friend the Secretary to the Admiralty asked the Navy officials their opinion of the tinned rations, and the reply was, that the condemnation of tinned meats for the Navy was very small, and did not average more than ·351 per cent. of the total stocks per annum. The Committee would therefore see that when the War Office selected these particular preserved rations for the Army, they had, at all events, a good basis for believing they had got a good article for the Army in the field.

MR. JOHN BURNS (Battersea) asked if the noble Lord could inform the Committee what proportion of the condemned rations were in soldered tins and what only in sealed tins.

LORD STANLEY said he had no information at present, but that was one of the points they were dealing with.

*MR. MACONOCHIE asked if there were not 1,150,000 soldered tins and about 550,000 or 600,000 unsoldered.

LORD STANLEY said he would endeavour to get the information.

MR. JOHN BURNS said he wished to press this point, because it would be of use in the future to know the proportion of soldered and sealed tins. He suspected that the soldered tins were infinitely the better.

LORD STANLEY said he dared say they were, and if he could get the information before evening he would give it to the Committee.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND asked if the result of the inquiry would not be given in Papers to be laid before the House.

LORD STANLEY said he did not think it would be necessary to publish Papers. The information could be given in answer to Questions.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND said he did not blame the noble Lord, because he had given the Committee all the information he could, but this was a matter which he was perfectly justified in raising. He did not know whether other Members came in contact, as he did, with the very poor classes of the population both in Ireland and this country, who could hardly find the means of subsistence and who were absolutely in a state of want and misery; and when they were told that £80,000 worth of food had been destroyed, either wrongly or because it was bad, it was a shocking state of things which ought to be thoroughly inquired into.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE said he wished to point out that the reply of the noble Lord was most unsatisfactory, because he talked of the recruit being entitled to this or that. It was not a question of what he was entitled to, but of State policy. They ought to attend to the point which the recruits themselves said was the greatest difficulty in the way of recruiting. There was a very general belief that the shortness of food was the difficulty in the way of recruiting at the present time. The principle laid down by the Admiralty Committee was sound, that the State ought to give that which a man needed in the shape of food. At present the State did not give him that.

MR. BRODRICK said he could assure the right hon. Gentleman that he was not in the least insensible to the appeal he made; but he asked the Committee to follow the course of the concessions which had been made, under the influence of the right hon. Gentleman, in order to avoid the difficulties to which allusion had been made. It was only six years ago, and then the trained soldier had 1s. a day pay, out of which he paid 3d. for messing and 2d. for stoppages. In order to add to the attractions of the service and to give the man more money in his pocket at the end of the week, the War Office induced the Committee to vote an extra 3d. to every man who had completed his recruit drill. That limitation was put for two reasons. First, it was urged that it was not fair to expect a man to go on serving after he had come to his full strength, and to a full knowledge of his work, at the same rate of pay as was given to the boy who had not his full strength or full trained ability. And second, because they were urged to establish a difference between the two classes. Again, the War Office obtained the permission of the Committee in 1901 to make a further very large concession, and give every soldier 2d. a day to carry stoppages. Then, next April, every soldier who had two years service would get 6d. a day on re-engagement. In other words, the trained soldier had formerly a pay of 1s. a day, then he had 1s. 5d., and soon he would have 1s. 11d.; and the difference between what he had in his pocket on a Saturday night would be 7d. a day formerly and 1s. now; and between 7d. a day formerly and 1s. 6d. soon, or an increase of nearly 150 per cent. He was more anxious than any man alive to see contentment produced in the Army; and he had done more than any man living to induce the Committee to agree to supply the wants of the soldier. It was now said, because they had done so much for the trained soldier, that they were damaging the position of the recruit. As regarded what was said by his hon. friend the Member for the Fareham Division, he recognised to the full the desirability of improving what he might call the attraction of the dining arrangements in barracks. The present Commander-in-Chief had given a great deal of attention to this subject, and, in this connection, the great expense which they had asked the State to incur in order to provide dining rooms should not be forgotten. They had now obviated the necessity of men dining in their sleeping rooms, or, in the case of cavalry regiments, over stables. He hoped his hon. and gallant friend would not find it necessary to proceed to a division. If he did, he would find in the lobby against him many who sympathised to the full with the object he had in view, and who had done all they could to carry it out. In his opinion, the Committee would be well advised to wait and see the effect of the new conditions before they approved of further heavy charges being incurred.

*COLONEL LEGGE said he felt some hesitation in withdrawing, because he felt very strongly in this matter. However, he quite appreciated all his right hon. friend had done for the Army; and he would again press upon him the great necessity of treating recruits well. He thought it was a pity that when the alterations in pay were made the question of the pay of recruits was not also taken into consideration. He quite understood that a recruit was an apprentice and should not be paid as well as a trained soldier; but he hoped the matter would not be lost sight of, and that some day or other the recruit would be better fed than he was at present.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE said he hoped the hon. Gentleman would not think him discourteous, but many hon. Members felt strongly in the matter, and would have to press for a division.

Question put.

The Committee divided, Ayes, 44; Noes, 110. (Division list No. 206.)

AYES.

Barran, Rowland Hirst
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burns, John
Burt, Thomas
Caldwell, James
Campbell, John (*Armagh, S.*)
Channing, Francis Allston
Crooks William
Davies, Alfred (*Carmarthen*)
Delany, William
Dewar, John A. (*Inverness-sh.*)
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Emmott, Alfred
Griffith, Ellis J.
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Hayne, Rt. Hn. Charles Seale-Hayter, Rt. Hon. Sir Aurthur D.
Henderson, Arthur (*Durham*)
Jacoby, James Alfred
Labouchere, Henry
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (*Cornwall*
Levy, Maurice
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
Mappin, Sir Frederick Thorpe
Mitchell, Edw. (*Fermanagh, N.*
Morley, Rt. Hn. John (*Montrose*
Nolan, Col. John P. (*Galway, N.*
O'Brien, P. J. (*Tipperary. N.*)
Partington, Oswald
Shackleton, David James
Sinclair, John (*Forfarshire*)
Spencer, Rt Hn C. R. (*Northants*
Sullivan, Donal
Thomson, F. W. (*York, W. R.*
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Ure, Alexander
Wallace, Robert
Wason, E. (*Clackmannan*)
Weir, James Galloway
White, Luke (*York, E. R.*)
Whitley, J. H. (*Halifax*)
Wilson, Henry J. (*York, W. R*
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—
Mr. Fuller and Mr. Bell.

NOES.

Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bailey, James (*Walworth*)
Baird, John George Alexander
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (*Manch'r*

Mr. Brodrick.

Balfour, Rt. Hn. G. W. (*Leeds*
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Campbell, J. H. M. (*Dublin Univ*
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, V. C. W. (*Derbyshire*
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J. (*Birm*
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J A (*Worc*
Chapman, Edward
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Corbett, T. L. (*Down, North*)
Craig, Charles Curtis (*Antrim, S*
Cranborne, Viscount
Crossley, Rt. Hn. Sir Savile
Davenport, William Bromley
Dickson, Charles Scott
Douglas, Rt. Hon, A. Akers
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson, Rt Hn. Sir J. (*Man'r*
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
Fitzroy, Hon. Edward Algernon
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Flower, Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Gardner, Ernest
Gordon, Hn J E (*Elgin and N'rn*
Gordon, J. (*Londonderry, S*)
Gore, Hn G. R. C. Ormsby-(*Salop*
Gore, Hon. S. F. Ormsby-(*Lincs.*
Gorst, Rt. Hn. Sir John Eldon
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Heath, Arthur H. (*Hanley*)
Heath, James (*Staffs., N. W.*)
Heaton, John Henniker
Hogg, Lindsay
Howard, J. (*Midd., Tottenham*
Kemp, Lieut.-Col. George
Kenyon, Hon. G. T. (*Denbigh*
Lambton, Hon. Fredk. Wm.
Lawson, John Grant (*Yorks. NR*
Lee, Arthur H. (*Hants. Fareham*
Lees, Sir Elliott (*Birkenhead*)
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N. S.
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lucas, Reg'ld J. (*Portsmouth*)
Lyttelton, Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
Maxwell, W. J. H. (*Dumfriessh.*
Melville, Beresford Valentine
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Murray, Rt Hn A. Graham (*Bute*
Murray, Charles J. (*Coventry*)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (*Bath*)
Palmer, Walter (*Salisbury*)
Parker, Sir Gilbert
Pease, Herb. Pike (*Darlington*
Peel, Hn Wm. Robert Wellesley
Percy, Earl
Plummer, Walter R.
Pretyman, Ernest George
Purvis, Robert
Rattigan, Sir William Henry
Reid, James (*Greenock*)
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Rutherford, John (*Lancashire*)
Sandys, Lt.-Col. Thos. Myles
Scott, Sir S. (*Marylebone, W.*)
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Shaw-Stewart, M. H. (*Renfrew*)
Sinclair, Louis (*Romford*)
Smith, Jas. Parker (*Lanarks.*
Smith, Hn. W. F. D. (*Strand*)
Stanley, Hon. A. (*Ormskirk*)
Stanley, E. Jas. (*Somerset*)
Stanley, Lord (*Lancs.*)
Stroyan, John
Talbot, Lord E. (*Chichester*
Thornton, Percy M.
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. E. M.
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Valentia, Viscount
Walrond, Rt. Hon. Sir W. H.
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Whiteley, H. (*Ashton-u.-Lyne*)
Williams, Rt Hn J. Powell (*Birm*
Wills, Sir Frederick
Wilson-Todd, Sir W. H. (*York*
Wodehouse, Rt Hn. E. R. (*Bath*)
Worsley-Taylor, Henry Wilson
Wortley, Rt. Hn. C. B. Stuart
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.
Yerburgh, Robt. Armstrong

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—
Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Anstruther.

Original Question again proposed.

*SIR A. HAYTER (Walsall) said that before the Vote was finally taken he wished to ask a few Questions. In the first place, he wished to know why the amount paid for advertisements in newspapers had nearly trebled. Then, with reference to the contribution of the Transvaal to the Government for supplies requisitioned during the war, he apprehended that that was a final payment for all goods supplied during the war. A Question was asked the other day as to the delay in paying for these supplies; but the Colonial Secretary replied that that was due to swindling demands. He should like to know whether the new check system, under which both purchaser and vendor signed, was or was not a success.

LORD STANLEY said that with reference to the increase in the amount paid for advertisements in newspapers, it arose from several causes. One was advertisements for recruits; another was connected with manœuvres; and a third was with reference to contracts, as they now endeavoured, as far as possible, to give information to the country generally as to War Office requirements, whether at home or abroad. All these resulted in an increase, which he hoped would, however, be justified, and, to a certain extent, recouped, as a result of greater competition. He was afraid he could not as yet give any information as to the practical result of the new check system; but they had every reason to suppose that it would prevent not only fraudulent demands but fraudulent receipts being given in any future war in which this country might be unhappily engaged. As regards practical results, however, they had as yet no experience.

MR. BUCHANAN (Perthshire, E.) said he wished to ask a Question with regard to special allowances. As he understood the matter, under the King's Regulations, when officers and men were under canvas they had certain special allowances given to them. Certain regiments were now serving in South Africa, which were not, it was true, under canvas, although in ordinary circumstances they would be under canvas. They were housed in disused tin huts erected during the war for remount and other departments. It appeared to him it was quite as essential that special allowances should be given to the officers and men stationed in these huts, as if they were under canvas. Any other interpretation of the regulations appeared to him to savour of red tape. If these officers and men were for purposes of economy and convenience not put under canvas, but in buildings which corresponded to canvas, surely it would be enforcing the letter of the law rather too strictly to deprive them of allowances to which they would otherwise be entitled. Great dissatisfaction resulted from the refusal of these allowances; and he hoped the Secretary of State for War would pay attention to the matter.

Mr. LOUGH (Islington, W.) said he wished to ask a question about the £50,000 which was put down for stores for China and Somaliland. He wished to know why stores were required for China this year, and with regard to Somaliland, he desired to ask if the sum now taken would be sufficient.

Lord STANLEY said that with regard to the Question of the hon. Gentleman the Member for East Perthshire, his sympathies were entirely with the officers and men who were at present serving in South Africa, where the cost of living was extremely high. The question of allowances to officers was under consideration, and communications were passing between the War Office and the general officer commanding in South Africa with a view to seeing what could be done to decrease the very large expense of officers stationed in South Africa. With regard to the China Expeditionary Force, the amount was asked for for the purpose of repayment to India, and also for the cost of the force still in China. With reference to the Somaliland expedition, he was afraid that the question raised by the hon. Gentleman would give rise to a discussion which would not be in order on this particular Vote.

Mr. LOUGH said he thought his question was perfectly in order. He wished to know whether the sum now asked for for forage and other supplies in Somaliland would be sufficient, or whether it would be necessary to ask for a supplementary Vote.

Mr. BRODRICK said that if £50,000 was not sufficient they would, of course, ask for a supplementary Estimate.

Mr. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) asked if the right hon. Gentleman would state whether in his opinion the amount was or was not sufficient.

Mr. LOUGH said he merely wished to know if the amount taken was in the opinion of the War Office sufficient. He thought that was a very reasonable question.

Mr. BRODRICK said his difficulty in giving figures arose from the fact that reinforcements for Somaliland had been sent from India, and some time must necessarily elaspe before they could ascertain what the Estimate required would be likely to be. If necessary, they would come to the House for a supplementary grant.

Question put, and agreed to.

£907,000, Militia: Pay, Bounty, etc.

Mr. YERBURGH (Chester) said he wished to direct attention to the position of the Militia battalions who went to South Africa. They numbered 180,000 officers and men, and, as far as he understood, the battalions which went out in 1901 and 1902 received very little recognition for their services. He himself thought that rewards were given with too free a hand, and that their value was accordingly diminished, but if the rewards had been too freely given, that in itself militated against the position of the Militia regiments which responded to the call the country made on them. Six battalions went out in 1901. One commanding officer was either killed in action or had since died; and of the remaining five commanding officers, four received the Civil C.B. Why an officer engaged in war should be awarded the Civil C.B. he did not know. But the fifth commanding officer did not receive any recognition whatever. In 1902 fifteen battalions went out, but neither officers nor non-commissioned officers nor men received any recognition. Therefore it amounted to this—that the only recognition given by a grateful country to the twenty-one

Militia battalions that went out was four Civil C.B.'s. He was aware that that had occasioned the gravest dissatisfaction in the Militia; and that the regiments considered that their services had not been properly recognised. The Militia had fought on a great many hard fields, and had always distinguished themselves; and they felt very strongly that the recognition they had received for their services during the late war was anything but generous; and there was a strong feeling that further recognition should be given.

COLONEL SANDYS (Lancashire, Bootle) said there was a strong feeling abroad that the war services of the Militia had been imperfectly recognised. He also protested against the award of Civil C.B.'s to officers of the old constitutional force. One of the great difficulties at present was to secure competent officers to enter the Militia, Yeomanry, and Volunteers, and gentlemen would certainly not be encouraged to come forward if it was felt that their services would be somewhat inadequately recognised. He believed it was the feeling of a large section of the officers of the force, that in connection with the late war their services had been lightly considered, and when the matter was fully understood the Secretary of State for War would probably be the first to recognise the fact.

MR. BRODRICK said he was grateful to the hon. Member for Chester, and the hon. Member for Bootle, for bringing this matter forward. The subject had been discussed for months past in the military and other papers, but, as was the case with many matters on which he could throw light, he was unable to enter into the controversy unless the subject was considered of sufficient importance to be brought up in the House of Commons. In connection with this matter an entirely false impression had been created in the Militia, and much criticism, for which there was no foundation, had been directed against the War Office. The desire had been to do everything possible, consistently with justice, for those who had volunteered. But justice had, of course, to be done to the Regular Army, and in estimating the awards it was impossible for the Commander-in-Chief—first Lord Roberts and afterwards Lord Kitchener—to put forward the names of men who had not seen as much service in South Africa as officers of the Regular Army, who for three years had been risking their lives. People hardly appreciated what had been done for the Militia in this matter. There was an idea abroad that in the issue of decorations the Militia had been greatly neglected. Setting aside the twenty-two battalions which went out at the end of 1901, there were 121 distinctions awarded to Militia officers alone, viz., sixteen Companionships of the Order of the Bath, twenty-five Companionships of the Order of St. Michael and St. George, and seventy-five Distinguished Service Orders. To be absolutely fair to the Militia, it should be said that eighteen out of the seventy-five were adjutants, who in most cases belonged to the Regular Army, and should therefore be deducted from the figures for the Militia. Seeing, however, that over a hundred distinctions had been given to the Militia, although many battalions were in South Africa for a shorter period than battalions of the Line, the Committee would probably agree that there had been no intentional neglect on the part of the War Office.

MR. YERBURGH asked, in order to complete the comparison, how many decorations and awards were given to the Yeomanry and Volunteers.

MR. BRODRICK said he could not give the figures off-hand, but it should be remembered that, by reason of the composition of the force, the Yeomanry were continually on trek and under fire, while many of the Militia battalions, although they did extremely useful work in blockhouses and on the lines of communication, were from the circumstances not nearly so often in contact with the enemy, and officers who had been on trek for a year or a year and a half naturally came under the eye of the Commander-in-Chief, or were reported oftener than officers occupied in more stationary duties. With regard to the twenty-two battalions which went out at the end of 1901, their service began in December, negotiations commenced in March or April, 1902, and peace was declared on June 1st. The longest period that any of these battalions served under campaign conditions was three months, whereas, when Lord Kitchener came to make out his recommendations, there were many officers whose service under campaign conditions extended over three or three and a half years. Lord Kitchener came to the conclusion, for which the War Office were not in any way responsible, that he could not mention in his dispatches the officers of regiments which, having gone out last, had not had the opportunity of service that others had had. Lord Roberts and he (the Secretary of State) had been accused of partiality because these officers had not been given decorations, but it was out of their power to do anything more than they had done, as they could recommend to His Majesty only such officers as had been recommended by the General in the field. His hon. friend had asked why Civil C.B.'s had been awarded. Her late Majesty was advised to give annually a certain number of Civil distinctions to officers in the Militia, Yeomanry and Volunteers. The whole of these distinctions were strictly limited by statute, and only vacancies could be filled up. This year there were four vacancies, and on the recommendation of Lord Roberts the four commanding officers to whom reference had been made were put forward to fill them. Everything, therefore, that the War Office could do, had been done. Their one idea had been to recognise in the fullest manner the services of the Auxiliary forces, and it was a matter of deep regret that there should be any idea that those services had been deliberately passed over. During the voyage home Lord Kitchener personally went through list after list and considered the case of each officer individually. No doubt mistakes had been made; it was inevitable in such cases that some men should come more prominently before the General's notice than others; but the Committee might be assured that both in the overhauling of Lord Kitchener's recommendations and in the original discrimination the greatest care was exercised with an intense desire to do what was right by all concerned. In the particular case of the Militia, nothing more than had been, could be done without injustice to others. Hundreds of officers had been named by their superiors without finding their way to the Commander-in-Chief's dispatches. He keenly sympathised with those men, but he was powerless to help them, and when it was stated that in connection with the war 2,800 honours and promotions had been recommended to His Majesty, the Committee would recognise that the War Office had not been niggardly in their endeavour to recognise services rendered under difficult circumstances by a large body of troops.

COLONEL SANDYS asked whether there was any reason why military C.B.'s should not have been given to military officers for military services. Civil C.B.'s might possibly be given to Volunteer officers, but he contended that Militia officers were entitled for military services to receive military decorations.

MR. BRODRICK said he should be very sorry to propose to change what he believed had been one of the greatest safeguards against favouritism, viz., the rule that no officer could obtain the military C.B. who had not been mentioned in despatches. That applied to every Regular officer, and *pro tanto* must guide the procedure with regard to Militia officers. The nearer the Militia is to the Regular officer the more important is it that the same rules should apply to the bestowal of decorations.

*SIR A. HAYTER said that they on that side of the House fully sympathised with the desire of the hon. Members, who had spoken, to improve the efficiency and content of the Militia force. But a stronger advocate than anybody on that side of the House was the Secretary of State for War himself, who, on March 4 of last year, said:—

> "We are going to do what we can to encourage Militia officers. (1.) In the first place we shall give every year a certain number an opportunity of serving with the Line regiments, in order that they may have the benefit of the training, and also to enable Line regiments to have additional officers at these periods of the year. (2.) We intend to continue the system of entering the Army through the Militia. (3.) We recommend for this year the establishment of a Militia reserve of 50,000 men, who have already served in the Militia or completed their reserve service in the Line."

He thought those were most excellent provisions, for they gave the double advantage both to the Militia and the Line, that young men competent to perform regimental duties should for a certain time be attached to a Line regiment. But in the month of June, according to the Returns, no less than thirty-seven officers resigned Militia commissions in one single Gazette. The officers on the establishment numbered 3,667, but the total now stood at 2,812, showing a deficiency of 885 officers in the Militia service. That was a very serious thing, and therefore everything that was possible should be done to increase the attractions in the Militia. What was the state of the rank and file? The total was 138,000 on the establishment, but there were 20,596 short on January 1st this year. That was an enormous shortage, and it required the serious attention of the military authorities to make up the deficiency. No less than 9,200 had been lost through desertion, and it was a large increase upon preceding years. One or two steps might certainly be taken. He could not understand why no Militia officers were ever thought good enough to be adjutants of their Militia regiments. Whenever there was a vacancy, it was filled up by some captain in the affiliated Line regiment, and Militia officers never seemed to obtain those very valuable prizes. He doubted very much if there was the same system prevailing amongst the non-commissioned officers and men of granting long service and good conduct medals as in other arms. They could not qualify in the same way as other forces and that was a grievance which ought to be remedied. After twenty years service a medal was granted to Volunteers, but the privilege had never been granted to the Militia. The right hon. Gentleman said in March this year that—

> "The Militia has done far more for the Regular Army during the late campaign than anybody could have expected of them. We are determined that the old constitutional force shall not be pressed out between the Regulars and Volunteers."

He thought they would have to recognise one or two things with regard to their service. With regard to the camp on Salisbury Plain, the great necessity in the case of young soldiers was to relieve them of all unnecessary fatigue, and great care should be taken that the whole of the time they were out should be spent improving their shooting and their drill. He wished to say that on this side of the House they did not yield in any degree to the other in their admiration for the Militia, and they were ready to do all they could to remove any discontent from the old constitutional force.

*MR. REGINALD LUCAS (Portsmouth) said it fell upon him, as there was no other Militia officer present, to say what were the feelings of both officers and men in that branch of the service upon this question. He desired to represent to his right hon. friend what had been laid before him with the justification of very high military authority, namely, the inadvisability of sending Militia battalions to train every year at Salisbury Plain. If they were told that Salisbury Plain was the only possible place where troops could be trained, that would be a very difficult case to answer, but as his right hon. friend the Member for Walsall had intimated, the situation at Salisbury Plain was very different from what some people who had never been there might imagine. It was so cut up with rifle ranges that it was almost impossible to go anywhere without being shot. They could not extend troops anywhere without marching at least three miles, and, as long as the musketry was going on, they had very little more room to teach young soldiers the elementary part of their training than they had at Wellington Barracks. It was, of course, a great advantage to a battalion to have ample rifle accommodation on the ranges so as to get through their musketry rapidly, and leave more time for field training and so forth, but even when a battalion had been put through its shooting, other battalions were using the ranges, and consequently it was almost as much tied to the camp. Then having done their day's work, there was really nothing whatever on Salisbury Plain to reconcile a soldier to his lot, or to encourage enlistment. He was not advocating the pampering of the Militia, but they must bear in mind that the Militia were civilians and not a Volunteer force, and if they did not want to pamper them at all events they did want to encourage them and give them some inducement to the military service, and they certainly ought not to throw any discouragement in their way. On Salisbury Plain there was nothing whatever to do. The ground did not permit of any recreation except a game of football, which might be a good game in winter but was a bad game in summer. There was nothing to look at except a few trees, and nothing ever happened except perhaps when a man came with a cart of oranges. And therefore the lot of those who had not antiquarian tastes and no great love of walking caused them to become so bored as to be almost demoralised.

He was speaking not only of officers but of men. They disliked the life so much that he was prepared to prove that recruiting was already falling off, and the numbers would be seriously diminished. There was another reason why men disliked going on Salisbury Plain every year. Many of them, who were men of business, thought it was a great convenience—almost a necessity—that in the course of their training they should be able to go home on Sundays, or whenever an opportunity occurred, to attend to their business. He was much struck this year with the large number of men who availed themselves of the opportunity of bank holiday occurring to go home, but many of them found it impossible to be back in time, and therefore lost a day's pay. But they were so anxious to go home that they were prepared to make that sacrifice. Let it be understood that their own counties were the proper places for Militia training. Such a rule would be not only a legitimate advantage and benefit to the men but a material inducement to renewed interest in the battalions, that would tend to the improvement of recruiting.

*SIR J. FERGUSSON (Manchester, N.E.) said that there was a battalion which numbered over 1,000 men when he was connected with it, and which always used to have a list of men ready to come on when they were required. He was sorry to say that that number had now come down to something like 400 men. At the suggestion of the Commanders of the Forces in Scotland the deputy-lieutenants were called together to consider what was the cause of this great falling off, and they had testimony that one great fault was the system of drilling recruits at the regimental Line depôts instead of by their own officers at the preliminary training. When they went to the depôts inducements were held out to them to join the Line, and out of 200 recruits only some thirty-five came back to the battalion. Some were induced to join the affiliated Line regiment; a good many disappeared. It seemed to him that that fact alone accounted for a considerable falling off in the strength of that regiments, because in the adjoining counties where there were no Line depôts, their regiments were full and remained full, and there was not the same constant inducement for them to go into the Line. It was a most expensive way of getting recruits first to enrol them in the Militia and then to give them a bounty to go to the Line. That was the system which was still going on, and it was not surprising that there should be a diminution in numbers. Something had been said of the dulness of the conditions of life in camp. That dulness was experienced by the Regular soldiers equally. He thought it was for the advantage of the Army that troops should be trained in larger bodies than formerly, and under a thoroughly regular system. There was no doubt, however, that in the camps there was a great absence of amusement, and consequently much diminished attraction to the ranks. He had had conversations with old soldiers of great experience, who were exceedingly anxious for the welfare of the Army, and they said that in these camps there should be buildings where the troops could have amusements greater than could be afforded by the canteens and other regimental rooms. Such buildings, capable of seating 1,000, had been erected at some stations at the cost of £3,000, and if that could be done in other places there would be amusement in the evenings. These buildings could be utilised as drill halls and for various military purposes, while they would attract theatrical and music-hall companies. He thought the suggestion made to him by these old soldiers was a very valuable one.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE said that the number at present actually serving was 115,000; that meant a diminution on the establishment, but it was very little different from what it was a few years ago. The most difficult point was with regard to officers. They must hope that the Royal Commission which was now sitting might, if it did not find a remedy, recommend sweeping changes in the constitution of the Militia and Volunteers. If they did not make very large proposals he hoped they would find some means of coping with the position with regard to officers. He should like to ask two Questions. One of them concerned the recent change in the Jersey Militia. The change made some time ago in the Guernsey Militia was fully satisfactory. The change in the Jersey Militia had been made much more slowly, and he wished to know what was the position of matters there. It was quite possible that his Question might be premature. The other Question was one which he was sure the Secretary of State would be glad to give information upon if he could. It referred to the position of the Militia field artillery. On this Vote this year they had an increase from 432 men to 1,298 for the Militia field artillery. That trebling of the Militia field artillery ought to lead the Committee to ask how far the War Office were satisfied, so far as they had gone, with that force. They must remember that they were relying upon the Militia field artillery to a considerable extent. Two years ago the Secretary of State for War said this force was necessary to complete his Army Corps scheme. Since that time certain modifications of his scheme had been made, and the House had been led to suppose that it was the intention of the Government to strengthen still further the Militia field artillery. They had a right to ask what had been the result of the experiment up to the present.

MR. WALTER PALMER (Salisbury) supported the suggestion made by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for North East Manchester in regard to the desirability of providing accommodation for amusements. At Salisbury such a building as had been suggested was erected at a cost of £3,000, and billiard tables and various amusements of that kind were provided.

MR. FULLER (Wiltshire, Westbury) asked the right hon. Gentleman to give some information as to the present state of the Militia reserve. He believed that the Militia reserve was non-existent, but the War Office were taking a sum on this Vote for the expenses and pay of the Militia reserve.

MR. MOON (St Pancras, N.) said he was at Salisbury Plain with a Volunteer regiment, and they found that the work was so hard that they had no time for recreation.

MR. BRODRICK said he was very glad to hear the testimony borne by his hon. friend the member for St. Pancras, as to the nature of the work at Salisbury Plain. He did think that the question raised by the hon. member for Portsmouth an important one, but there was no doubt it would be difficult to accommodate the idea of military training to the notion of a fair amount of holiday which some Militia regiments had always enjoyed and naturally expected to get. Of course he quite realised that the thing must not be pushed too far. The military view was that if the Militia regiments in camp could be brigaded or brought into contact with the Regular forces that would be of the greatest advantage. Of course he must remind his hon. friend and the Committee that if they refused to have ranges at Salisbury Plain, and if they had left more room for manœuvring, they would have spoiled the object for which the ranges were put there, because the troops would have had to march so far that it would have been impossible to carry out musketry practice. But the Committee should not suppose that Salisbury Plain was completely covered by ranges. He ventured to say that by marching three or four miles off, every Militia regiment they had could exhaust themselves without encountering the ranges again. He thought the Militia should not camp every year, but that they should at certain periods if possible go through their annual training in their own neighbourhood. That was important when they considered the recruiting figures. It was also important to try to find in the neighbourhood some means of recreation. He did not find that the military authorities were quite as anxious about that as some Members of this House. They naturally put training first of all, as they thought it was difficult to make anything like a soldier in a month. He could only say that he would give his attention to the matter. The right hon. Gentleman spoke of the deficiency of officers in the Militia. The question of officers was of course a very difficult one, and he did not propose at present to enter upon it at any length. All these questions had been sent for the consideration of the Royal Commission. With regard to the officers there were two reasons that made it more difficult at this moment to cope with the absence of officers than formerly. The first was that the Yeomanry drew its officers from the same class, and there had been a great rise in the Yeomanry. The second was that the officers who had patriotically given up their time to go out to South Africa had in many cases suffered very largely in their business, and, when all was over, it was natural that they should release themselves from the ties of the Militia, feeling that they could not give their time with due regard to their own interests. That was the cause of the reduced number of officers. One step the War Office had endeavoured to take. Until two years ago any young man who desired to put on a uniform, and could induce the Lord Lieutenant of the county to make him a deputy-lieutenant, was able to obtain that uniform, which was very like that of an Army general, and he could wear it for the rest of his life. They had now put a stop to what he thought was an unreasonable use of the uniform. In one county, which he would not name, but it was neither one of the largest nor most important, the Lord-Lieutenant had made 126 deputy-lieutenants. He himself felt it his duty to approach His Majesty on that question, and now they had laid down a proportion of deputy-lieutenants to the population which would not give that Lord Lieutenant more than twenty. What was more, the regulations now provided that no lieutenant could be made until he was twenty-eight years of age. He thought His Majesty's regulations on this subject would be appreciated by hon. Members.

He would add a few words in regard to Militia recruiting, which the War Office had been carefully watching. It should be remembered that within the last few years 3d. a day had been added to the pay of the Militia, and the bounty of £1 had been increased to £1 10s. Then, three times during the winter months—October, December, and February—another £1 had been added, or £4 10s. in all, as well as pay. That was a substantial increase of emolument. He could not altogether join with his right hon. friend in the appeal he made that the Militia should be paid at the same rate as the Line. He valued the Militia exceedingly, but he valued the Line much more. The hon. Member for Wiltshire had asked as to the state of the Militia reserve. They would not require the whole of the money taken, but more men were coming forward steadily to join the Militia reserve—at the rate of from 150 to 200 a week. The present reserve only started four or five months ago, and the number was now between 4,000 and 5,000; and before long the total would be appreciable in case of mobilization to fill up the ranks. As regarded Jersey, a satisfactory arrangement had been made as to the Militia there, and they owed to the Lieutenant-Governor of Jersey, Major-General Abadie, C.B., very great thanks for the tact, judgment, and perseverance with which he had persuaded and induced the island authorities to recognise their obligations in the matter. As to the Militia field artillery, the position was this. The military authorities were most highly satisfied with the Militia field artillery formed in 1901, but they had not extended the experiment, because they wanted to see whether the results then obtained, when they had power to mobilize, would be maintained when the men would not be compelled to mobilize. He had not yet got the reports for this year, but if these were as favourable as last year, he was satisfied that they could extend the system, If they could induce the military authorities to take a favourable view of the Militia field artillery they would have gone a long way to secure a full establishment.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE: What about the scientific training of the officers?

LORD STANLEY: Every facility is being given to them to obtain a scientific training.

Vote agreed to.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £480,000, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the charge for the pay and allowances of the Imperial Yeomanry, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1904."

*SIR A. HAYTER said he would like to ask the right hon. Gentleman whether he could not take steps to make up the list of deficiencies in the Imperial Yeomanry, which seemed to be in as bad a case as the Militia. He saw from the Return that the officers on the establishment were 1,566, and the number enrolled only 1,016, or a deficiency of 550. As to the non-commissioned officers and troopers, the establishment was 33,256, and the number enrolled only 21,625, or a total deficiency of close on 12,000 men. Then the Returns showed that the deficiency was greater in some regiments than in others. In the county with which he had a connection—Somerset—the West Somerset regiment was short 224 troopers, and the North Somerset 330, or a total shortage for the two regiments of 554 on an establishment of 1,200 men. He did not know whether they were both entitled to have adjutants. It seemed to him that regiments which had only half their number, should not enjoy the same staff privileges as those who were full or nearly full up to their establishment. Again, the two Kent regiments were 500 men short. He should think very little of this if the recruiting was improved, but, according to the Returns, there had been actually no substantial increase. The number of recruits taken during the year was 8,845, as compared with 8,216 in the preceding twelve months. It seemed to him that they were spending a good deal too much on the staffs of these small regiments. He noticed that the East Riding of Yorkshire regiment, with an establishment of 596, had only a strength of fourteen. Why was it kept up as a regiment at all?

*COLONEL LEGGE said he wanted some explanation about the Imperial Yeomanry and what they were for. It was a hundred years since the Yeomanry were first raised in this country, and they were then Volunteer cavalry raised under the Act of 1802, subsequently amended by the Acts of 1803 and 1804. They remained under these Acts until two years ago, when the right hon. Gentleman introduced and passed a Bill quite at the end of the session, which completely altered the status of the Yeomanry. It put them under the Militia Act and converted them from Volunteer cavalry into mounted Militia. The officers had, in consequence, to get new commissions. When the right hon. Gentleman brought in his Army Corps scheme in the beginning of 1901 a resolution was passed to increase the Yeomanry from 12,000 to 35,000, and they were constituted a mounted infantry force for home defence. The uniform was to be khaki and the arm was to be the rifle and bayonet. He congratulated the right hon. Gentleman on one thing, and that was having dropped the Hindustani word "khaki" for the good old English word "drab," which was a good serviceable colour. But he found that some of the new regiments were by no means satisfied with that uniform. There was the City of London regiment with "blue grey tunics—facings purple;" the 2nd County of London with "scarlet tunics—facings purple;" the 3rd County of London with "green tunics—facings and busby-bag green, plume green and yellow." There was the Surrey regiment, of which his right hon. friend the Secretary of State for War was honorary colonel, which was dressed in drab tunic with scarlet facings. It was a very handsome uniform, because it was a lancer uniform, very becoming, he was quite sure, to his right hon. friend, who would set it off with great advantage. The cap lines of a lancer were simply a hat guard; but this regiment did not wear a lancer cap but a cow-boy hat, although it kept the lancer cap-lines! Then he found that these regiments had got other names. The City of London regiment was called

"Roughriders." What was their business in an Army Corps to be? Were they going to break in the horses purchased by the Remount Department from the Omnibus Companies? The 3rd County of London regiment were called "Sharpshooters." Well, he always understood that sharpshooters went in front to prepare the way for the thin red line. But every soldier now was a sharpshooter, and he should like to know what place these County of London sharpshooters were to take in the Army Corps? The 2nd County of London regiment were called the "Westminster Dragoons." According to Johnson's Dictionary a dragoon was "a kind of soldier that serves indifferently on foot or horseback." But if this regiment were to be mounted infantry they would fight on foot; they would only be mounted for the purposes of locomotion. After looking through the descriptions of the uniforms of these regiments, he was reminded of Thackeray's description of the Hammersmith Hussars, which had a uniform of a yellow jacket, pink pantaloons, silver lace, and light-blue pelisse! With regard to the training, the Militia Act did not provide sufficient time for the training of the Yeomanry. Some information should be given on these points, and also with regard to the arming of the Yeomanry. The Committee had been told they were to be armed with rifles and bayonets. None of them had bayonets, but he had been told, though he could hardly credit it, that one regiment was armed with that antiquated and obsolete weapon, the lance, which was now only carried by Regular troops on ceremonial occasions as a relic of their departed glory. He also thought the number of the Yeomanry was largely in excess of the number required. He could not see what they wanted so many mounted troops for. "32,670 available for home defence and 5,226 available for naval fortresses." He would like some little information as to how it was proposed to use mounted men for naval defence. He would also like to know whether the time for the training of the Yeomanry could not be extended and what position they held with the defensive forces of this country. He noticed that in the Second Army Corps they were called the Cavalry Brigade, and in the Fourth they were called the Mounted Brigade. The right hon. Gentleman in his scheme of 1901 said he was going to put his money on the Yeomanry, and he had certainly done so. He should like to take some of the money off, but he did not know whether he would be in order in moving any other Amendment than that which he had down on the Paper. He thought a great deal of money might be saved on this force, without imperilling the safety of the Empire.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £479,900, be granted for the said Service."—(*Colonel Legge.*)

LORD STANLEY said he had almost hoped that the prejudice which in old days existed with regard to the Yeomanry might have died out; that those who were in the cavalry in the past might have come into line with those in the cavalry in the present, with regard to the force that had done much distinguished service in South Africa, and which was the nucleus of the greatest mounted force at the present moment. The hon. and gallant Member said the Yeomanry in the first place had too little training, and of course the more training that could be given to them the better the military authorities would be pleased. They had to give them as much training as would adapt them to military requirements, and having regard to the composition of the force, they gave them as much training as it was possible to give. The training the Yeomanry received was, in his opinion, amply sufficient, and was at the same time the maximum to which the Yeomanry could be expected to go. The hon. and gallant Gentleman sneered at the names of these regiments, but the names were those which the regiments had held for years and years, and when they were put under the Militia Act and formed into a general body of Yeomanry, the Government, in his opinion, would have done wrong to have taken away the names upon which hung so much *esprit de corps.* The hon. and gallant Gentleman had spoken of "Roughriders" and "Sharpshooters," but he would be the last person in the world to countenance any attempt being made to deprive a regiment of a name upon which hung so much of the *esprit de corps.* Carbines had been done away with in the cavalry for some time, but would the hon. and gallant Gentleman suggest because they had done away with the carbines that the "Carbineers" ought to lose the name they now possessed?

*COLONEL LEGGE: They are an old regiment.

LORD STANLEY said these regiments would grow old in time, and he hoped the names they had given themselves would last for generations. The Yeomanry scheme was one of the schemes of which, if he might say so, his hon. and gallant friend might be justly proud. The figures of the Yeomanry not long ago were only 8,000 or 9,000. On the 1st of January this year they were 26,000 odd, and in this year alone there had been an increase of 3,600, so that the Committee might take it that the Yeomanry was a great living force. The hon. Member mentioned many regiments which were under strength, and asked whether the staffs of those regiments could not be reduced. No doubt there were some regiments under strength, but he believed that officers commanding in every case were doing their best to raise the standard. Some regiments, of course, had prejudices, and would only take one class of men and the Government preferred that the standard should be raised without in any way changing the status of those who come in. The hon. and gallant Gentleman spoke of others which were over strength, and asked that they should be reduced, but the most important thing in a regiment was its Establishment, and it ought to be established in the highest possible degree. The Yeomanry was a force which had been developed quite recently, and its growth had been abnormally large, and with that had come a proportionately greater deficiency of officers. In the matter of all Auxiliary officers it seemed to him a problem almost insoluble how to provide officers. He hoped they would have from the Royal Commission some suggestion as to how officers could be obtained. He was perfectly certain the authorities would be only too glad to get any hints that could be given to them as to obtaining officers and as to checking expense. There was one point on which he agreed with the hon. and gallant Gentleman, he thought it was a great pity that there should not be a design of uniform which was serviceable and cheap. Facings he did not mind, because they could be taken off. In the case of old regiments they must sacrifice something to the past, but in the case of new regiments he did think something of the kind might be done.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE said that those who sympathised most with the cavalry grievance upon which, the hon. and gallant gentleman, who was no doubt smarting from the removal of the weapon which made the cavalry of the past, had moved the reduction could not follow him in all his strictures upon the Yeomanry, but he thought the Committee generally would need to be assured that the Yeomanry were not being made a sham by making them show sometimes as Yeomanry and sometimes as cavalry. The hon. and gallant Gentleman had more justice in his attack on the names of the new regiments. Some of them had taken most pretentious names. The name of "Roughriders" was very pretentious unless applied to a regiment which really could ride. While upon this point he thought the hon. and gallant Member had something to go upon, he did not agree with his general strictures on the Yeomanry, but he thought the Committee should be anxious to see that they were not being put off with that force, which could not displace Regular cavalry or mounted infantry. There was some truth in the allegation that these troops were being used to some extent in the War Office Returns, both as cavalry and mounted infantry, and the statements of the War Office, and even Lord Roberts himself, had to be very carefully examined for fear that the country might be led to believe that it possessed a great mass of Regular cavalry, which it had not got. The Committee should insist upon seeing what was in the mind of the War Office with regard to the future strength of the cavalry; because, although the Yeomanry might be all they desired to see it, it could not take the place of Regular cavalry or mounted infantry.

MR. GUEST (Plymouth) thought this was one part of the policy of the right hon. Gentleman, the Secretary of State for War, which offered most ground for congratulation, and that it had been a most signal success. Anyone who regarded the Yeomanry as fitted to play its part in the defence of this country in case of invasion, could not but congratulate themselves upon the increase of numbers, due entirely to the action of his right hon. friend. He thought it was unreasonable to complain of the Yeomanry in the tone of the hon. Member. There had been great improvements in the training and the general position of the Yeomanry since the pre-war days. It was a great gain to have got them under conditions more nearly those under which they would have to serve. Through the policy of his right hon. friend there had been a distinctly better feeling towards the Yeomanry in the War Office, which was now prepared to make arrangements for the training of the Yeomanry and to allow the Artillery to come out and train with them, which was of great assistance to the proper training of the Yeomanry. He rose particularly to make two suggestions with regard to the subject of the training of the Yeomanry. In the first place, in his opinion it was unduly long, and he would point out that, just at the moment when they had changed the drill and had commenced to give them a far more simple drill than that of the Cavalry, which was difficult to learn, in proportion as they had simplified the training they had increased its length. If the Yeomanry had shorter training, a great many more men would join, because many found it difficult to leave their occupations for 18 days, who would gladly join if the training could be brought within a fortnight. The other suggestion he desired to make was with regard to the Yeomanry reserve. He thought for cavalry men to join the Yeomanry reserve would create invidious distinctions. What he desired to see was a real reserve for the Yeomanry. He believed it would be quite possible, by enlisting men with the basis of three years with the regiment and six with the reserve, to get as many men as at present, and to avoid losing altogether yeomen on the expiry of their term with the regiment. Many men had to leave from family or business considerations, but it did not follow that they had lost sympathy with the force, and it would be a valuable scheme if they could pass to a Yeomanry reserve. For a very small retaining fee men would go through a course of shooting, and parade one day a year; £2 a head would probably cover the cost, and by that means a real reserve for the Yeomanry might be built up. He hoped the right hon. Gentleman would give the matter his consideration.

MR. W. F. D. SMITH (Strand, Westminster) said that his experience had been the exact opposite to that of his hon. friend. The difficulty in his regiment arose from men coming in the middle of the training and saying their employers could not let them remain the whole time. In one respect a town regiment had an advantage over a country regiment: it was able easily to get its men together for squadron drills, whereas a country regiment, scattered over a wide area, had great difficulty in so doing. In his opinion, the present period of training, considering the pay, was not too long, and certainly it was none too long to acquire the knowledge a yeoman was now expected to possess. The drill itself was much easier to acquire than it used to be, and he could assure the right hon. Baronet that the cavalry drill, as a whole, was not expected from the Yeomanry. As to the expenses of officers, in his opinion the sum granted to Yeomanry regiments was, as a general rule, quite sufficient. It was perfectly possible to run a Yeomanry regiment on the sum now given. There were certain items, however, in respect of which officers could be helped. Nobody would suggest that it would not be an excellent thing for every Yeomanry regiment to acquire a camp, but it certainly involved expense to the officers. No provision whatever was made for sergeants' mess, and there was no tent issued which could be used for a mess-room. These tents had always to be hired, and formed a considerable item of expense. With regard to the position of the permanent staff regimental sergeant-major, so far as he could make out, the Yeomanry regulations made no provision in that direction. Five permanent staff sergeants were allowed for each regiment, one of whom became regimental sergeant-major, and, with the adjutant, did practically the whole of the work, both on training and during the year. At present, not only was the permanent staff sergeant-major who acted in this capacity in a worse position as regarded rank than his Militia brother, in that he was not a warrant officer, but he was in a worse position than the sergeant-major similarly placed in a Volunteer regiment. The sergeant-major of a Volunteer regiment after twenty-one years service reckoned his pension under Class I., whereas a Yeomanry regimental sergeant-major reckoned his pension on precisely the same basis as a squadron sergeant-major, under Class II., and that alone meant a difference of 3d. a day in his pension. He asked whether the right hon. Gentleman could see his way to recommend the War Office to put the Yeomanry regimental sergeant-major on the same footing as his Militia brother, or, failing that, to put him on the same pension basis as the regimental sergeant-major in a Volunteer regiment.

COLONEL NOLAN (Galway, N.) asked, in reference to the Irish Yeomanry, whether the noble Lord could give the Committee any information as to the number of regiments and the number of men to be raised in Ireland. On the general question, it seemed that the cost of the Yeomanry worked out at £21 per head. That was about one-fifth the cost of a Regular cavalry man, but if the men could not shoot they were not worth the money. He understood that they devoted their time on training to riding and manœuvring, and did not practise shooting.

LORD STANLEY said there were two Irish regiments of Yeomanry, and they were given precisely the same establishment as the English regiments. He did not recollect the exact figure, but he believed it was 550.

SIR ELLIOTT LEES said that although he felt inclined to stray into the path which the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean had rather tempted them to discuss—the relative numbers of cavalry, mounted infantry, and Yeomanry in this country—he feared that if he attempted to do so he should find himself out of order after the first two or three sentences. He recognised the importance of the country being well supplied with mounted infantry, but whether or not the establishment of Yeomanry was the right way to accomplish this he could not discuss at the present moment. His hon. and gallant friend asked what Yeomanry were, and what they were going to do. At the present time it seemed to him that the right hon. Gentleman hoped the Yeomanry would be available, not only for home defence, but that they would supply a certain number of additional troops to supplement the mounted infantry in case of war. The two objects were not always incompatible, but, at the same time, they were very different objects. If they wanted the Yeomanry for home defence they must try to enlist a rather different class of men than those which were required to supplement the mounted infantrv abroad on foreign service. If they wanted men to volunteer in case of war, it mattered very little from what class they drew them, or whether they had any position or stake in the country, or any knowledge of the particular locality. The less stake they had in the country the more likely were they to volunteer for the extra pay. If they wanted Yeomanry for home defence they ought to do all they could to retain the British farmer in the ranks. There was no finer cavalry material in the world than the English farmer, who provided his own horse, for they were accustomed to a certain amount of discipline in the hunting field, and the British farmer, officered by his neighbour, whom he often followed all over the country hunting, was the ideal cavalry soldier. This was the class of men who formed the nucleus of the first batch of Yeomanry sent out to South Africa during the late war.

With regard to the training period, he thought it was very difficult for a large farmer to go away for so long a time. The small farmer found some difficulty also, but the extra pay which the War Office now gave the Yeomanry compensated him for the length of the training. In the case of the large farmer it was very difficult for him to spare practically three weeks away from his business. On the other hand, it was ridiculous to suppose, if they took the Yeomanry as a reserve in order to get volunteers to go abroad, that they could train them in the space of three weeks.

They could not make a horseman in three weeks. They might give a man sufficient confidence to induce him to volunteer in that time, but it was impossible to unite those two classes and still retain them usefully in the ranks. When the Secretary of State for War brought his Yeomanry scheme forward there were a great many Yeomanry officers in the House, and they protested against the increased length of the training, but the right hon. Gentleman assured them that the fullest permission would be given to commanding officers to grant leave to their men. He believed that the whole solution of this problem lay in trusting the commanding officers, and giving them fuller powers to choose the best men they could get to command Yeomanry regiments, who must be of local standing, and who should also possess military knowledge, and be efficient. When they had chosen the commanding officers they should give them a free hand and trust them to produce the best regiments that local circumstances would permit. The War Office would probably say that that had been their intention all through, but if they intended it to be carried out, and the commanding officers were allowed a free hand, this fact should be impressed upon the generals commanding the Army Corps. It was almost impossible for the officers commanding the Yeomanry to go against the wishes of the generals commanding the Army Corps, and they should be informed that they were to allow the commanding officers to have a free hand. With regard to the training, there seemed no reason why the first four days should not be given up, where necessary, to recruit drill or to the riding-school drill, but it would be ridiculous to ask men to do this who had been accustomed to riding and might be even more efficient in this respect than the officers. He hoped his right hon. friend would take these matters into his serious consideration, because it was a lamentable thing for commanding officers to lose some of their best non-commissioned officers of good position, who attracted recruits of good standing, and even old Bisley veterans, whose services were lost because they could not devote the time to the training, owing to calls upon them at home. He ventured to bring these points before the notice of the right hon. Gentleman, knowing how anxious he was for the welfare of the Yeomanry, and what a good friend he had shown himself to be to them during the last few years.

MR. PEEL (Manchester, S.) said the hon. Member who introduced this Motion for a reduction seemed to think that fourteen days was the only training the Yeomanry got. He wished to point out that they had a great number of drills besides those they got when they went to camp, although that was a very important portion of their training. His hon. friend the Member for Plymouth had suggested separate training for regiments, accordingly as they came from the town or the country. A great many regiments contained men both from the town and the country. The regiment he belonged to was recruited partly in the country and partly in the town. There was a very great difference between the men from the town and from the country, because even in a small country town, as a rule, they knew as little about riding as they did in London. The hon. Member opposite had called attention to the small numbers in these regiments, but he should remember that they had only very recently been started, and he did not think it was a good thing to fill up a regiment at once. By taking time they were able to show that some standard was required to join the regiment. Some commanding officers were very stringent in regard to the conditions they imposed; and that should not be interfered with. As to the length of training, he should like it made longer if possible. He was aware that there was a difficulty in giving training in places not outside their own county, although that would be an enormous advantage in many cases. In his own county there was really no place where they could drill 400 or 500 men. His regiment contained a good many townsmen, and if they were obliged to take their fortnight's training outside the county they would probably leave the regiment. He was glad to hear the noble Lord speak about the growing expense of officers, because that was a matter of great importance in many new regiments. There appeared to be a great determination that these new regiments should be run upon a very economical basis, and upon that matter he rather agreed with the criticisms made by the mover of this reduction. The full dress for officers was, of course, purely voluntary, but it soon became practically compulsory, and very difficult for officers to avoid. Then there was the question of the full, smart, dress for the men. In this respect very often there was dissatisfaction caused because a neighbouring county had a very smart dress for the men, while another county had not. He thought the Secretary of State for War should give some attention to that matter, and that he should be even stricter with commanding officers than he had been, with reference to the growing expense of Yeomanry officers. He had taken some trouble to recruit officers himself, and he was always asked what would be the expense. That was a difficult thing to give a definite answer upon, because the expense was rather uncertain. The only thing that was not uncertain was that the expense was generally great.

Another matter which he should like to complain about was that the training was very short, and that the amount of work done during the training was diminished by several causes. In the fifteen days there were probably two Sundays, and then there was too much inspection. He should have thought that one day was sufficient for inspection, but it was supposed to be necessary that the inspecting officers should have two days for inspection—one day in field exercise, a sham fight, or something of that kind, and then the next day going through drill with each squadron commander or troop leader. That was a large amount to take out of this small amount of time available for training. It was certainly his experience, and he believed it was the experience of other officers, that the General of the district came down and said that he must have an inspection. Then the whole of another day was lost for the regular training, for something had to be shown to him which was not a part of the regular training. Then the General of the Army Corps came down, and he had to be treated the same way, a special day being set apart for him. He should like to suggest to the Secretary of State for War that possibly this inspection was a little excessive, and that it would be better if they were left a little more to do their own work in their own way. He should like to ask what were the regulations which permitted, in the same way as in the Militia, officers to join the Yeomanry and then pass through the Yeomanry into the Regular cavalry. He did not know whether the right hon. Gentleman was going to move any further in the way of creating a separate force inside the Yeomanry for foreign service. He could not help thinking that it would be an invidious thing to establish this class of men in the same regiment. If the necessity arose they could count on getting a considerable number from the Yeomanry for service abroad. Perhaps he might be allowed to congratulate the right hon. Gentleman on the great success of the new Yeomanry movement.

MR. BRODRICK said he could assure his hon. friend the Member for South Manchester that he sympathised with his remarks with regard to the number of inspections, but he thought that what he had said showed that the position the Yeomanry held in the country was such that, all those who were placed over them, desired to see as much of them as they could. With regard to the expenses of officers, he was informed that the expenses of the officers during training in some regiments, which he would not name, had amounted to £72 each. He did not wish to use strong language and say that that was a scandal, but it was certainly very undesirable. Whatever the War Office could do to prevent that sort of thing would certainly be done. With regard to the suggestion that regimental sergeant-majors should be made warrant officers, he understood that there were conditions, at all events, in the stronger regiments which might justify something being done in that respect, and he would undertake to consider the question during the autumn. Two serious questions had been asked—first, was this large number of Yeomanry needed, and, secondly, what was going to happen with regard to the Yeomanry reserve? With regard to the first, he maintained that of all the forces that had recently been raised, this body of Yeomanry was the most useful—for this reason, that it supplied the one thing we had never had, namely, a sufficient number of mounted troops which, if we were to make preparations for invasion, must exist to cover any army which might be put in the field. A cavalry regiment of 700 men cost £65,000, and for that sum 3,000 to 3,500 Yeomanry could be had; and, as had been shown in the late war, for our purposes it was important to have numbers of men on whom we could draw in an emergency. As to the proposal to put 5,000 Yeomanry at the service of the military authorities for service abroad in case of emergency, trained cavalry of the very first order was wanted now as much as ever; but a certain body of mounted troops, not so highly trained as cavalry, was also required who could assist the forces of the country and take a certain position in an emergency. It was that function which the Yeomanry were being trained to carry out. Some dislike had been expressed of the existence of two classes of Yeomanry. His answer was that there were two classes of Militia up to last year, and it had never occurred to anybody to say that a man who did not join the Militia reserve was a different being from the man who did. It was a question of pay. He did not regard the subject as dead, and he proposed to consult the Yeomanry Advisory Board and the commanding officers on the subject, and if he secured the support of the latter, he hoped the Yeomanry Members of the House would not make it too difficult to carry out what the military authorities, on the one side, and the commanding officers, on the other, desired.

MAJOR JAMESON (Clare, W.) said he could not allow this Vote to pass without a protest against the very serious position in which the Yeomanry had been placed by the action of the right hon. Gentleman the Secretary of State for War in placing a proportion of that force under totally different conditions from the rest. Up to the present time the Yeomanry had been Volunteers, and he was astonished that so many Members in the House who had been, or were members of that force, had not protested against this revolutionary change in the constitution of the Yeomanry, who had been essentially recruited from amongst the farmers of the country to remain at home for its defence. Although the right hon. Gentleman proposed to give the Yeomanry a little more money, the new system by which their Volunteer element was to be done away with was bound to be a failure. During the late war was there not plenty of demonstration that the Yeomanry would turn out for foreign service if need be, and what then was the use of altering the whole character of the force? He regretted very much the alteration in the clothing of the Yeomanry. When he first joined the service during the Franco-German War, he had a very keen recollection that within a few months their heckles were taken from them and they were given helmets; and if the Zulus had beaten in the last war the War Office would have given them feathers and paint! The War Office were altering the Yeomanry, Artillery, and every other uniform in order to suit the needs of South Africa; and anything more absurd and ridiculous he never heard of. He had seen a Yeomanry cap the other day which was a cross between a French shako and a dustman's hat. These extraordinary alterations of uniform would not, in his opinion, bring recruits to the Yeomanry force. If a cavalryman and a Yeomanryman was not well dressed and thought himself invincible in love and war, he was not worth 1s. 6d. a day.

*COLONEL LEGGE said he should like to assure the Committee that he duly appreciated the services of the old Yeomanry, of which he was deeply sensible. He had not any intention of sneering at the new Yeomanry, and the illustrations which he had given were taken from official documents. He begged leave to withdraw his Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Original Question put, and agreed to.

£1,280,000, Volunteer Corps, Pay and Allowances.

*MR. C. R. SPENCER (Northamptonshire, Mid) said he wished to know whether the War Office would be prepared to consider the possibility, or rather the advisability, of equalising the position of sergeant-majors in Volunteer regiments to that of sergeant-majors in the Militia. The sergeant-majors in the Volunteers did an infinity of work. They acted as paymaster sergeant, quarter-master sergeant and orderly clerk, they drilled their recruits, they attended to the range orders, and also did the work of the armourer-sergeant. He thought he was not asking too much in demanding that these non-commissioned officers should be treated in the same way as the sergeant-majors in the Militia. There was another point which interested him considerably. On page 49 of the Army Estimates there was an item "Officers Outfit Allowance, £18,000." Last year the amount was £15,500. He would be obliged if some official at the War Office would inform him who were the officers who got this allowance.

MR. BRODRICK said that some years ago, in order to assist officers, £20 was given to each officer for his outfit.

*MR. C. R. SPENCER said it was one of the increasing misfortunes of age that he should have been debarred from enjoying that £20. He was not in command of a Volunteer regiment, but he knew there was a very strong feeling that occasionally, if possible, their training in camp should take place in their own neighbourhood. That would be an advantage, he considered, for recruiting, financial, and other purposes. If the right hon. Gentleman would consider this point, most country Volunteer officers would be deeply grateful to him.

*MR. SEYMOUR ORMSBY-GORE (Lincolnshire, Gainsborough) said he wished to direct attention to the question of the re-armament of the Artillery Volunteers. He had addressed a great many Questions on the subject to the Secretary of State for War and had been informed that the matter would be settled. Another hon. Member had been told that a number of mobile artillery would be armed with 15 pounders. That promise, however, had not been fulfilled. He considered that the War Secretary had perpetrated two enormities. He had inflicted great hardship on the Volunteer Artillery and still greater hardship on the British Museum and other institutions which contained antiquities of ancient date. The discontent felt by Volunteers was not altogether without foundation. There was nothing that so deteriorated a body of men as the knowledge that the work they were doing was utterly useless. The mobile artillery force had made great sacrifices. There were only five brigade divisions in the United Kingdom; and one of them he was connected with. It was all very well to say that the Volunteer Artillery were of no use. If that argument could be sustained why did they exist at all? He recollected a debate in the House of Lords when there was an acrimonious interchange between the late Commander-in-Chief and Lord Lansdowne as to the conduct of the War, and when Lord Wolseley said that Lord Lansdowne had advised him to send the Volunteer Artillery to the front with obsolete guns. The mobile artillery were now to be armed with 4·7 guns. That would destroy the very being and character of the force. To begin with, he had heard from various officers connected with the Sheffield and Lanark forces, that the men were not of sufficient physique to be able to move these big guns. That did not apply to the 3rd Kent or Lincoln, or to the 1st Monmouth. In 1891, the Inspector General of Auxiliary Forces, inspecting the 4th West York, said he was well satisfied with what he had seen, and that, though the corps had not quite the same degree of mobility as Royal Field Artillery, which could not be expected after only three days' mounted work, it was, so far as mobility and general efficiency were concerned, well worthy of field guns. Sir A. E. Turner further said that he had seen only two other Volunteer Artillery Corps so good. One was the 3rd Kent (Woolwich Arsenal), the other the 1st Monmouth, which in 1900 had done three months' training at Aldershot and on Salisbury Plain. Continuing, he said he might safely say that these three corps would be attached as Field Artillery to the new Army Corps, and would be the first to receive the promised issue of new pattern guns. But at the present moment these brigade divisions were armed only with obsolete 16 pounders. An additional grievance was inflicted on them by putting them through infantry foot drill, instead of cavalry foot drill. In fact, the Artillery Volunteer was at present of a nondescript and hybrid character, a mixture of modernity and antiquity—a sort of cross between a fox-terrier and a dodo. It was also said there was no chance of the Woolwich Volunteers being called into requisition, for the reason, that if war broke out, they would be required to work in the Arsenal. There was no substantial reason for that. They were not skilled workmen, but labourers employed around the Arsenal. It would be far better if the War Secretary were to look after material he had at hand than seek aerial schemes for military organisations in the future. Because the Artillery Volunteers were not properly armed, and because of the neglect with which his right hon. friend had treated them, the hon. member for Woolwich now sat on the Opposition Benches. He hoped, however, that his right hon. friend would pay more attention to the matter in future.

*MR. WYLIE (Dumbartonshire), said he wished to call the attention of the Secretary of State for War, to two points, connected with the Volunteers, which were of immediate urgency. They were the inadequate supply of ammunition to the Volunteers, and also the inadequacy of the camp allowance. He agreed that the Volunteer Artillery ought not to be supplied with obsolete weapons. He had been told by a commanding officer that he had seen in a museum, at Hanover, guns marked obsolete, which were of the same pattern as those used by his own regiment in this country. Volunteers had to thank the War Office for very small mercies; and therefore, he was not surprised that they should have been thankful to the War Office for having granted them a little suspense until the Royal Commission had inquired into the whole subject. He was glad their case was being considered and that they would have a chance of proving that they were an efficient branch of the Volunteer service. Although he had criticised the policy of the War Office in connection with the Volunteers, he did not associate himself with the wholesale injudicious criticisms that had been passed upon the Secretary of State for War, because he believed he had done splendid service to the country at a time of storm and stress. He questioned whether any of his critics could have shown such ability under the circumstances. The right hon. Gentleman had done more for the Regular Army, Militia, and Yeomanry, than any War Secretary of their time. He had very much increased the allowance to these branches of the service. He believed his Yeomanry scheme as a whole was assured of success, and that success would follow his scheme in connection with the Regular Army and Militia, because he had based his scheme on large augmentations of general facilities and allowances. But he did not think the same success was attending his administration of the Volunteer force, probably because he had not had time to go into the matter thoroughly. In one year, 1901-1902, the Volunteers had fallen off from 277,000 to 251,000, a decrease of 26,000 from 1901–2 till 1902–3, or 10 per cent., whereas the shortage of officers was still more marked. In 1897 the shortage was 1,188, while on 1 January, 1903, it was as much as 1,895, which was an increase of 40 per cent. He was an advocate of the sound policy of increasing the number and efficiency of the Volunteers in proportion to the increasing necessities of the Empire. He thought that, to secure this, the Capitation Grant should be increased to a minimum of 60s., rising to 60s. for various degrees of efficiency; there should be a more liberal allowance for rifle ranges and an additional allowance for going into camp.

A Royal Commission had been appointed to consider the whole subject, but there were two questions of immediate importance which the War Office was quite capable of dealing with without waiting for the report of the Commission. There had been a considerable shrinkage in the Volunteers, both in the rank and file and in the officers, and if the Government would take up the two questions he had indicated he thought they would do much to preserve the Volunteers in the condition in which they found them. With regard to the question of ammunition, Lord Roberts had pointed out that shooting was now the most important part of military training, and should be encouraged as much as possible. The War Office had encouraged it in the Army, Militia and Yeomanry, but the Volunteers had not received a round more ammunition to enable them to arrive at high efficiency. In the opinion of all officers concerned the present allowance of ninety rounds was miserably inadequate, and in his opinion it should be increased to 150, which was the least allowance that could be made to insure efficiency. The minimum allowance for going into camp should be at least 5s. He believed the success of the Yeomanry was due to the allowance they received for going into camp, which enabled them to go back from camp with from £5 to £7 in their pockets. If it was desired to make the Volunteers a success the men should have £1 or 30s. a week so long as they were in camp. They had proved their efficiency in South Africa, and it was a great disappointment to them that while the Yeomanry had increased by 150 per cent., the Militia by 50 per cent., and the Army to a considerable extent, by the judicious increase of pay, allowances, and facilities, the Volunteers were steadily decreasing, owing to more arduous training being required of them without the corresponding increase of facilities and allowances which should have accompanied the demand.

MR. BRODRICK, in reply, said it was not desirable to discuss this Vote at any great length to-night, because, as would be seen from the speech of the hon. Member who had just sat down, the debate dealt almost exclusively with points which were now before the Royal Commission, and it would not be respectful to the Commission if he were to forestall their decisions on all the points raised by the hon. Member. On the other hand, if he were to make suggestions it would be like giving a lead to the Commission as to what they should propose. He hoped the Report would be out well before Christmas. His hon. friend must not suppose, however, that the Volunteers were suffering in the meantime. The numbers increased enormously during 1900 and 1901. On 1 January last they were 250,000, and by the latest Return in July the numbers were 256,000, while 176,000 went into camp last year. The question of money was a most serious subject. Nothing was easier than to raise demands which every Member of the Committee would be glad to meet if he could, but the concession of 5s. asked by his hon. friend would mean an expenditure of £112,000.

*MR. WYLIE said it would have been well worth the expense.

MR. BRODRICK said there were many things well worth the expense which they could not do. They had provided the Volunteers with 154 4·7 inch guns of the most modern type. On no previous occasion had so much been given, and it represented the extreme which the military authorities required in the country. They had Volunteer batteries of artillery in excess of what was required by the military authorities for national defence, but it was a subject on which the Royal Commission would doubtless give some advice. Such armament caused the Volunteer Artillery to be as costly as the Regular Artillery. The question of sergeant-majors would have to be left until the Royal Commission had reported. Many people seemed to think there was a want of sympathy on the part of the Executive with the Volunteers. He assured the Committee that such an idea was absolutely unfounded. When Lord Roberts came home from South Africa the Volunteers were for the first time recognised as fit to serve the country in the first line of defence, and they were assigned that postion in the fourth, fifth, and sixth Army Corps; but at the same time something more in the way of efficiency was asked of them. That request had been taken as evidence of want of sympathy. The War Office had fully recognised that unexpected demands frequently caused embarrassments, and they had not, up to the present, enforced any demand which had caused any serious reduction in numbers, but they had asked the Commission to consider the matter. When he first went to the War Office, the capitation and other payments for Volunteers amounted to £451,000 for a force of 218,000 men; to-day, with a force of 256,000 men, the capitation and other allowances were £1,068,000. That did not show any want of sympathy on the part of the the Executive; it showed rather that they had been very considerate, and they would continue to be so He hoped the Committee would now allow the Vote to be taken.

*Sir CHARLES DILKE asked what meaning was now attached to the phrase "field artillery" in this Vote. Two or three years ago the intention was to form batteries of field artillery in the ordinary sense of the term, but he understood that that intention had now been given up.

Mr. BRODRICK was understood to say that the proposal was to arm the Volunteers with heavier guns than the ordinary field artillery. He did not think the military authorities were willing to consider them as in the first line; they looked upon them rather as supplemental to than as taking the place of Regular artillery.

Mr. MALCOLM asked whether it was possible for the 2nd Battalion of the Suffolk Volunteers to obtain the camping allowance which, under certain circumstances, they would have received last year. The battalion comprised a large number of agriculturists, and they were told to go into camp in harvest-time. That was a most unfortunate order, and it would have been absolutely impossible for the battalion to comply with it in anything like full numbers. The commanding officer represented the case to the authorities, and pointed out that only 130 men out of 600 could go to camp, and they would prefer being brigaded earlier in the year. They were allowed to do that, and went to camp 400 or 500 strong. They made themselves very efficient, and they naturally expected to receive camping allowance. In that expectation, however, they were disappointed, because they were not brigaded at the time stated by the War Office, and they were mulcted to the extent of £430. That was an extraordinary penalty for a poor battalion to have to bear, and it might result in the disbandment of the battalion.

Mr. BRODRICK replied that it was a question between a higher and a lower allowance. Unfortunately the battalion did not get into the condition necessary to entitle them to the higher allowance. It was an exceptional case, and he had put it before the Treasury, but the Treasury, who were within the exercise of their right, felt that the higher allowance should only be given if certain conditions were fulfilled. Those conditions were not fulfilled, and therefore they did not get the allowance.

Vote agreed to.

Resolutions to be reported.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £530,000, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the charge for the pay, etc., of the medical establishment, and for medicines, etc., which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1904."

Mr. BURDETT-COUTTS (Westminster) hoped the Committee would not think it unreasonable that he should wish to make some comments on this Vote. There had been a reform of the Army Medical Service, the earliest and, perhaps, the most elaborate reform, as far as it went, of any which the right hon. Gentleman had produced. But this House, or this Committee, had had practically no opportunity of considering it, and he personally had not troubled the House on the subject for more than two years. He hoped that was an example of patience which would commend itself to the Committee. He would remind the Committee that the scheme of reform was first brought forward in October, 1901, in the shape of the Report of the Committee appointed by the right hon. Gentleman to consider the re-organisation of the Army Medical Service. In February, 1902, this scheme was remodelled and expanded by Royal Warrant. No opportunity was afforded of discussing it till the following July, when the Vote was specifically put down for the afternoon, and specifically not put down for the evening sitting. It was not taken in the afternoon, but it was taken in the evening when several of those interested had been informed on reliable authority that it could not come on and were not present. Another year had now passed and the Committee were therefore in this position, that they had had a scheme of reform of a very important part of the Army, brought forward, formulated, confirmed, and put into practice, without Parliament having had any adequate opportunity of discussing it. He thought he could show that it was not by any means a merely professional matter, but one that ought to understood and discussed by hon. Members, and could be discussed without professional jargon and made perfectly clear to the lay mind—the class of mind which he always thought, if it saw professional or departmental matters clearly, was the best judge of it. When the matter was one concerning the economical administration of one of the great Departments, it was still more incumbent on hon. Members to look closely into it. He was far from wishing to depreciate the work, still less the intentions, of the right hon. Gentleman, the Secretary of State for War, whose honesty of purpose, great industry, and many other admirable qualities, he respected and admired. He was all the more ready to pay him every tribute, because he was the first to alter—he perhaps might be pardoned for saying, to clear and elevate—the ministerial atmosphere that surrounded this question, and to make some acknowledgment to those who had brought it forward. But while attaching full importance to what had been done, he proposed to show, and he felt it his bounden duty to show, that if they left the matter as it now stood, and went forward in the belief that the Army Medical Service had been made efficient, or cast into a shape that would make it efficient, to meet the demands of a great war, they would simply court a repetition of those disasters which had followed every so-called attempt at reform during the last sixty years.

And, it being half-past Seven of the clock, the Chairman left the Chair to make his Report to the House.

Resolutions to be reported To-morrow; Committee also report Progress; to sit again this evening.

EVENING SITTING.

SUPPLY [21ST ALLOTTED DAY.]

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[MR. JEFFREYS (Hampshire, N.) in the Chair.]

ARMY ESTIMATES, 1903–4.

£530,000, Medical Establishment, Pay, etc.

MR. BURDETT-COUTTS said when the sitting was suspended he was stating that the scheme of reforms of the right hon. Gentleman did not provide against disaster in the time of a great war. Before explaining that he wished to remind the Committee of what had been reformed, and to lay it up to the credit of the right hon. Gentleman. First, there had been a wise and healthy association of the civilian with the military medical element, not only for the purposes of reform, but in the normal administration of the Army Medical Service. Four civilian medical men had been placed permanently on the Advisory Board. In stating these reforms he did not propose, for want of time, to criticise the manner in which they had been carried out. If he did he should have something to say about the unreasonableness of expecting to get eminent civilians to share in the multifarious duties of that Board for the payment of £200 a year. Of course they knew that two very distinguished surgeons, Sir Frederick Treves and Sir Alfred Fripp, were now performing that service. But when the enthusiasm of war was over, if they wanted to make the civilian element a permanent factor in the normal administration of the Army Medical Service, and to get the best men for the purpose, they could not do so for £200 a year. It was trading on their patriotism. They had better pay them nothing and let them have the honour and unmixed gratitude for rendering a public service, which certainly belong to the gentlemen he had named. But what he feared most was that this civilian element would be gradually eliminated so far as its practical functions went, and that the administration would fall back into that old routine of departmentalism under which it slept for so many years, waking only at the sound of war to produce one of its perennial medical disasters. The second great reform had been an increase of pay to the Army medical officer, which naturally improved his position. The third had been an increase of numbers, about the advisability of which there was some doubt—save in one respect; that so far as an increase of numbers was necessary in order to give the Army medical officer study-leave and opportunities for self-improvement, and therefore to raise his efficiency—so far it was legitimate. It was not legitimate, as it was intended to make the Army Medical Service independent of civilian aid. The fourth reform was the granting of this study-leave and facilities for self-improvement, which the Army medical officer was always seeking for, and which he rarely could obtain, and then had to pay for himself. It always seemed to him a great reproach to all concerned that after his entrance examination the Army medical officer had no opportunities of study afforded him in a profession in which continuous and well-directed study was quite as necessary as practice. Under this head he would like to ask the right hon. Gentleman what had become of the proposed London Military Hospital and Military School? The fifth reform, and one of the most important, had been the introduction of promotion by merit rather than mere seniority, this promotion by merit being secured by a mingled system of examination and selection. The sixth reform was applied to what was shown to be in the last war a crying evil—the condition of the orderlies. Their status and pay had been improved. The absurdity of strong men, who ought to be at the front, struggling over clerks' work at the base; of thinking that every man, because he was an orderly, could be an efficient nurse, which required three years' training,—or could be a good cook; the absurdity of not differentiating from these skilled departments the orderlies who were only suited for general labour; all this, they learned from a speech made by the Director-General last October, had been recognised and the orderlies had been classified according to their various functions. The seventh reform —he did not know what progress had been made in it, but it was promised in the speech of the Director-General to which he had referred—was the founding of a sanitary department. The last and greatest reform of all had been a full recognition of the principle of female nursing in military hospitals, and the organisation of an efficient female nursing service under the intelligent and experienced supervision of Her Majesty the Queen.

He had given a full list of the reforms that had been carried out, or were included in the scheme, or were promised by those responsible for the Department; and he was naturally the first to admit they were wise and prudent reforms, because they were all pointed out, and argued one by one, with instances of what was going on under his own eyes in South Africa, in the series of articles he wrote to the *Times.* Those articles were entirely devoted to the question of reform of the Army Medical Service, to the crying need for it, and for a more reasonable and generous treatment of Army medical officers, until the time came when the state of things out there required a drastic and immediate change, and the state of things here—the dream of satisfaction into which the public had been lulled—made it unavoidable in the interests of humanity to bring public opinion to bear on the subject. He had no fault to find with the right hon. Gentleman for what he had done. But it was what he had not done that would involve us at any moment in great danger if we were plunged into another war. It was so true that it almost sounded like a platitude now, to say that we could never maintain an Army medical service in time of peace equal to the demands of a great war. It was an axiom that applied generally to the question of Army reform, but specifically and most of all to the Army Medical Service. It was all very well to perfect our normal system for peace time; but one of the objects, perhaps the most important object in doing so, was to be able to elasticise and expand it at any moment for a great war. The two things ought to be inseparable if we were to have economy and efficiency and be ready for war.

In this respect the Army Medical Service was in a peculiar position, and differed from other departments of the Army. They could not always get artillery or trained cavalry or scouts or other skilled factors in the field force from outside; but they had always ready at hand an unlimited supply of civilian medical men who were willing and anxious to go out to a war. It was always so. It was so when the South African War broke out, and afterwards when the pressure was at its greatest. Why then was this civilian complement not properly utilised? What caused the breakdown? It was because there was no organisation of this civilian medical aid. He should have thought this was the first and most important lesson taught by the recent war. But such an organisation was entirely absent from this great scheme of reform.

Anyone looking at the reforms would gather that the medical failure in the last war was due to the want of scientific attainment on the part of the Army doctor. Was that so? Not in the least; or only in the smallest possible measure. If they had been the most skilful physicians and surgeons in the world, or even up to the standard that this scheme contemplated, and had been paid four times what it laid down, did they suppose that would have averted the catastrophe? No. They wanted more *matériel*, more men, more orderlies and nurses and doctors. They would want them in the future; and they wanted them selected, not by hasty advertisement at a day's notice, but by some carefully prepared scheme of registration, or other means of securing an enlargement of their medical service, which would not only be suitable and efficient but on which they could rely at any time when the need might arise. Had anything of this sort been done? It had been a great deal talked about: but had it been done? He put aside the important matters of a Militia Medical reserve, and a Volunter Medical reserve, because he did not know what had been done in those directions. The worst of it was we never did know what had been done, and we never cared to inquire in a quasi-professional matter like this. We took things for granted, and went to sleep until one fine day we woke up and found the deluge upon us. Then we made a terrible row, and hanged someone. And then we went to sleep again. There was only one way out of this fatal cycle of disaster and attempted reform; only one way to shake off the national reproach that had run through the history of the Army Medical Service; only one way to secure efficiency and economy with regard to it, and that was by a carefully thought-out scheme of civilian aid to be ready when called on by a great war. It was a monstrous thesis to put forward that a civilian doctor or surgeon could not treat a soldier. Yet it was this suggestion, born of Army medical rank, which placed the sword before the stethoscope, and fostered by departmentalism, which lay at the root of all our failures, and it was this idea which permeated the right hon. Gentleman's scheme of reform. It was perfectly obvious. Speaking at Whitehaven last October, the right hon. Gentleman had cited, as a proof of the success of his reform, that "whereas up to the time of the late war they were getting one candidate for two vacancies, they were now getting between two and three candidates for one vacancy." That was his great object, to enrol men in the Royal Army Medical Corps—men who had to be paid and had to be pensioned at the expense of the nation. What had that to do, what could it ever have to do, with being prepared for a great war? That could only be done by civilian aid.

The methods by which civilian aid could be utilised in time of war were twofold. In the first place, there was the simple method of enlarging the numerical strength of their staff by taking into it, for the time required and no longer, civilian aid. They wanted a scheme prepared for obtaining this aid, for utilising it, for distributing it in its requisite proportions, for settling the relations of the civilian medical man to the Army medical officer, and for avoiding many other difficulties that arose in South Africa. The absence of any such scheme gave rise to untold evil. Some of it was told. At No. 8 General Hospital at Bloemfontein, where there were nearly 2,000 patients, the strained relations between the two classes of medical men disorganised the whole work. When the principal medical officer of South Africa was questioned about it, he stated that "he knew of the friction"; and he added the strange remark that he "thought the friction would go on until the machine stopped." A medical man of large practice and great experience at home would be given the rank of a lieutenant, and so be placed not only as to his rank, but as to the medical treatment of his patient under an Army medical captain or major, who had no experience at all. He could tell the Committee, if time allowed, of several cases where this occurred to the infinite detriment of the patients in the hospital; but he would only mention one. A consulting surgeon of a large hospital, a man of great experience and scientific ability, was attached to a certain hospital in the war, given the rank of lieutenant, and placed under an Army medical major. His requisitions for the barest medical necessities were refused by the major, and he had to go off to a town thirty miles away and buy them himself, which proved they could easily have been got; his prescriptions were revised by the major; cases of internal operations of a most serious and delicate kind were attempted to be removed the day after by the major; until at last, exasperated and indignant for the patients whose lives were in his charge, the consultant surgeon threatened to punch the major's head if he came into the wards again. And the major, thinking discretion the better part of what he supposed he would call "discipline," kept out of the wards after that. He thought, considering the number of medical practitioners there were wanting employment, that for purposes of economy to the State, and to avoid a heavy pension list, it might be used to a great extent in peace time. He found nothing about that in the scheme. But it certainly wanted careful organisation beforehand for war time.

But there was another and more important form of civilian aid in war time, which demanded thorough organisation in time of peace. They did not want only civilian medical men; they wanted civilian hospitals, complete and self-contained, organised and ready to go out to a war, either to take over the base hospitals and so free the trained Army medical staff to go up to the front, their proper place, or not only staffed but equipped, prepared to be sent up and dotted along the lines of communication as stationary hospitals; or even prepared, if need be, to take the field, as some of them did, gallantly and efficiently in the late war. The Committee would remember—and the country would always remember—the splendid part played in the medical history of the war by the great system of civilian hospitals voluntarily and generously provided from England—from Scotland, from Ireland, from Wales, aye, and even from the colonies. But they could not rely, in providing a formal scheme for the medical needs of their Army, they had no right to rely upon the generosity and patriotism of private people. Those noble sentiments would, no doubt, always exist, but a hundred causes might prevent their taking this particular form. But if they could not rely on what was done being done again in the same way, and from the same sources, they could at least take it to a certain extent as a model, and improve on it, and make it a certainty. They could create a system of medical units for war time in connection with the large civilian hospitals and great medical schools, units with staff equipment and training, ready to go out, and engaged to go out, to a war when called on.

His hon. friend the Member for Edinburgh University made some interesting remarks about this last year. But eighteen months before that, in February, 1901, a scheme of that kind, and one upon the lines of which any satisfactory scheme in the future must be founded, was drawn up by a gentleman of great military-medical experience, and one who played a very important part, not only a practical but an originating part, in the system of voluntary civilian hospitals in the late war, and was laid before the Secretary of State for War. Long before that, he himself constantly and publicly urged the provision of some such scheme, because it was the only means by which they could place the medical service, at a moment's notice, on a war footing—with a due regard to efficiency and economy. It would save the country from "bloated armaments" in peace time, in the shape of an excessive Royal Army Medical Corps and a heavy pension list; it would save the lives and the health of our soldiers in war time, by providing them with a better medical service than they could get from any other source. What had become of this scheme and this proposal? Was it still in the state it was last October when the Director-General, speaking to the civil profession, eloquently advocated "the establishment in time of peace of medical units for service when war comes," and the perfect organisation of such units, and said—"Where are volunteer field ambulances?"—he used the word "volunteer" not in connection with that branch of the Army but as applied to the great medical schools—"above all where are our volunteer general hospitals?" And he, speaking nine months after that, but three years after the proposal was publicly put forward and argued, asked where were these things? Where was this scheme? It was an integral part of any real and effective reform of the Army Medical Service; it was absolutely essential, in order to avert another disaster in war-time. It required thought and study and organisation, and careful co-ordination with the normal Army Medical Service—all of which could only be done in peace days. Where was it? What had been done, or what was being done with regard to it?

He trusted the Committee would pardon him for having addressed them at such length on this Vote. It involved a matter literally of life and death to the Army—the well-being and health of our soldiers in time of peace; and in war time the saving them from death, which comes, he thought, in its most pathetic form, not on the field of battle, but in hospital. They had no reason to complain; they never had had and never should have any reason than to be other than proud, of the courage and efficiency of the Army medical officer on the field of battle. The history of the South African war was illuminated by many brilliant examples of those qualities to which no one had been more anxious to do full justice than himself. But they must bear in mind that no amount of coolness and heroism in the field could make up for an imperfect and ill-organised medical system, which was detected by the hospital in war time. No gallant dash to save a wounded man and carry him back under heavy fire; no steady imperturbable dressing of wounds in the zone of the quick-firing rifle could supply the place of that careful organisation and that combined economy and efficiency which they, as Members of Parliament, ought to demand in this department of the Army. All their efforts for reform should be directed to these aspects of the question.

Mr. BRODRICK said he fully recognised the services which his hon. friend had rendered in bringing this question forward. In the changes that had been suggested it was recognised that it was highly important that they should not rely on anything that might become stereotyped in the department, and in order to avoid that they had enlisted the services of leading members of the medical profession who were in closest touch with the most recent medical developments of the day. They had been peculiarly fortunate in this respect. He had invited some of the most eminent members of the medical profession to assist him in the organisation of the department; and he could not express too strongly his gratitude to those gentlemen who had given up high fees and personal practice to sit with him on a Committee in the months of June and July giving up their time frequently from five o'clock in the afternoon to eight o'clock in the evening probing this question to the very bottom, and, having done that, had expressed themselves willing to serve on the Advisory Board at a mere nominal honorarium in order adequately to reorganize the Army Medical Department upon which so many lives depended and which embraced so many medical men. Besides the Army medical members, the Advisory Board consisted of five eminent civilian doctors and surgeons, including Sir Charles Ball, Dr. Fripp, and Sir Frederick Treves. These gentlemen had been most constant in their attendance, attending three or four Committees a week. He thought it was most unusual in any scientific profession to find professional men willing to give so much time to public objects. The War Office had endeavoured to meet their views with regard to pay, with regard to the increase in numbers, and, what was more important, with regard to the increase of leave for study to be carried out in the Medical College, for which a site had been secured. In future they would be able to obtain their knowledge of the medical profession in the very best centres for scientific research. With regard to nursing, the men had been given a special rate of pay, and the female nursing service, organised by Her Majesty the Queen, contained the very best nurses in the profession. Previous to the appointment of the Advisory Board, the number of candidates was not equal to the vacancies, but since the number of candidates had increased, and at the last examination there were 32 candidates for 30 vacancies, and he understood that some of the candidates held positions as house-surgeons in the best hospitals in London. The Advisory Board had made a review of the whole of the military hospitals of the United Kingdom, in which review one of the civil members had always taken part; and he hoped they were on the eve of many great changes, in the way of not treating so many trifling cases in hospital, in having much better equipment, more scientific structures, and a general modernising of the institutions. He had asked the House for a sum of £150,000, which he proposed to entrust to a small Committee of which Sir C. Perry, now a most active and responsible official at Guy's, would be the chairman. That Committee would apportion the money among the various hospitals with a view to securing their modernisation. Another point was the organisation of an adequate civilian reserve and the definition of their *status* as compared with the Army Medical Corps. He hoped that before the House met again he might be in a position to tell his hon. friend and the House that these were all accomplished facts.

His hon. friend the Member for Westminster had alluded to one or two other subjects. The points he had brought out during the war in South Africa were subjects which required to be brought out, and the fact that the hon. Member had been on the spot amply justified him in bringing them out, and by taking that course he rendered a great service to the country. Nevertheless he maintained that during the war the Army Medical Corps amidst great difficulties did their duty with the most absolute self-denial and success under a system in which organisation was wanted more than initiative, and which organisation had never up to that time been asked for by the House of Commons. All he could say now was that they recognised those difficulties, and personally he was grateful to his hon. friend the Member for Westminster for the share he had taken in suggesting remedies.

*MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty) called attention to the inadequate equipment of Fort George with surgical instruments. He thought the right hon. Gentleman ought to see that more up-to-date instruments were supplied to the hospital at Fort George. He hoped the Secretary of State for War would look into this matter. Some years ago he went down to Aldershot, and he was surprised to find that the surgical instruments in use there were of the most ancient order. They had been slightly improved since, but very little.

MR. BRODRICK replied that two members of the Board were making inquiries into this matter.

COLONEL SANDYS said he felt that the point which he desired to bring before the Committee was one which ought not to be allowed to pass without some kind of comment—he alluded to the practice of giving military titles to medical men. He was aware that this was a very delicate subject to touch upon, but it seemed to him that the present titles should not be given to the medical profession, and the different grades of Army surgeons might be met by such titles as assistant-surgeon, surgeon, field-surgeon, and others. Special privileges might be given in regard to service, the granting of emoluments, and other things. For certain reasons concessions had been made to medical clamour by granting certain titles, but he was convinced that as regarded the Army itself no good whatever had been done by allowing the medical profession to assume military titles.

MR. BUCHANAN thought the hon. Member for Westminster must be astonished, although no doubt pleased, at the very changed tone in the reception of his criticisms. It was not owing to the War Office, but to the hon. Member and a few others, that attention was called to the gross insufficiency and the scandalous mismanagement of the medical arrangements at the beginning of the war. The loss of many lives, and the amount of sickness and torture and misery endured by our soldiers, officers as well as men, were due to the culpable mismanagement of the right hon. Gentleman now sitting on the Treasury Bench. ("Oh, oh.")

MR. BRODRICK: I must beg the hon. Member to moderate his language, and to observe, first of all, that I was not at the War Office at the time he refers to, and that I took the full responsibility, when the War Office was organised to send 70,000 men abroad, of sending 250,000 men. Perhaps the hon. Member will withdraw the observation he has made. From the point of view of the comity that exists among Members of this House he will withdraw a charge which he cannot substantiate. [MINISTERIAL cries of "Withdraw."]

MR. BUCHANAN said, in so far as the right hon. Gentleman corrected him by the reminder that he was not then Secretary for War, he acknowledged that he was in error; but the Government of which the right hon. Gentleman was a Member did not make anything like adequate provision in the medical department for the exigencies of the war. That was only one part—the right hon. Gentleman might ride off on that plea if he liked—of the gross mismanagement and want of foresight shown in every matter connected with the inception of the war. In no Government Department had the want of foresight been so remarkable as in regard to the Army Medical Corps. It was well remembered how the hon. Member for Westminster was received by the Prime Minister and other responsible Ministers when he first reported what he had seen in South Africa. The improvement in the Medical Department now, and the future improvements contemplated, were the result of a very tardy repentance on the part of the Ministers of the Crown, and were due mainly to the perseverance, fortitude, industry, and courage of the hon. Member for Westminster, and those who acted with him.

MR. WHITLEY (Halifax) called attention to an item of £5,000 for an expeditionary force in China. The China expeditionary force was sent out more than a year ago, and he could not understand how it came about that at this time of day the Committee should be asked to pay £5,000 for this purpose. He wished to know how it was that they were now called upon to pay this item.

LORD STANLEY said the reason was that certain accounts had not been rendered at the commencement of last year, but as they knew they would come in during the present year they now asked for money to meet those charges.

MR. WHITLEY said he understood that some expense was still going on in regard to this force, which could hardly be called an expeditionary force at the present time. He thought there should be a distinction drawn in the estimates between the money spent on the war in China and that spent for the maintenance and protection of the Legation.

Vote agreed to.

2. £1,838,000, Transport and Remounts.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE called attention to the small establishment of horses. At the present moment, although the number of horses of cavalry regiments had been slightly increased there was still a very small number of horses of effective age. The number of horses per squadron kept up in connection with British cavalry regiments was smaller than that of any other army in the world. They did not average more than 110 horses per squadron. He believed that the number of men justified at least 135 horses per squadron, and he wished to press the Government if necessary, rather to reduce the number of cadres than keep up so small an establishment of horses.

MR. BRODRICK said he had more than once had meetings with officers of cavalry regiments on this subject. It was not altogether merely a matter of horses. The officers stated that, having regard to the number of men, they could not with advantage take more horses than they had already got. Consequently, while he agreed with the right hon. Baronet, he was in the hands of the military authorities, who said they got all the horses they could manage, considering the work the men had to do. If the War Office gave them all they wanted they could do no more.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE: You ought to be able to do as well as any other cavalry in the world. There is no other cavalry with so small a proportion of horses.

MR. BRODRICK: There is something peculiar about the British Army in many ways In most cases it spends more than any army in the world. In this case it spends less.

MAJOR SEELY (Isle of Wight) thought the right hon. Gentleman should take this criticism more seriously to heart. The right hon. Gentleman had informed the Committee that he had frequently made representations on this subject, and that, so far, he had not been able to get any further, because the officers of cavalry regiments had pointed out that they had so many men engaged in other duties that it would be impossible to keep more horses employed. But surely that was a most ridiculous state of things. When every other country could keep up a proper establishment of horses we might be expected to have the very best and most efficient. He would suggest that, if the commanders of cavalry regiments said it was impossible to have this under the present plan, a change should be made in the plan, which was admitted to be not entirely creditable. He asked the right hon. Gentleman to give this matter further attention.

Mr. BRODRICK said the present supply of horses was adequate to mount the men and take them into the field. He was in full agreement with his hon. friend, and he could assure him it was not a question of parsimony, but whether he should dictate to the War authorities to keep a larger number of horses than they wanted to keep.

Mr. CALDWELL (Lanarkshire, Mid) asked for information with respect to the hired transports for bringing home the troops from South Africa. The amount taken this year was £812,500. He wanted to know how many hired transports there were at present. He supposed that the work of bringing home the troops from South Africa was nearly finished. There had been very considerable waste in this respect, a great many transports having been kept practically idle. Had the Admiralty no hospital ships at all? He found in connection with the China expedition that a hospital ship was hired from the Peninsular and Oriental Company, and it remained out there for many months.

The SECRETARY to the ADMIRALTY (Mr. Arnold-Forster, Belfast, W.) said he could not give the hon. Member full details in regard to the number of ships that had been engaged in transport work. What happened was this. Requests were made by the War Office for ships, and the Transport Department of the Admiralty furnished the transports. In some cases they were kept for considerable periods of time, waiting for troops coming back. That was necessary during the war, but not now. Every care was taken to get the transports at market rates. The question of hospital ships for the Army was a totally different matter. The number of transport ships had been considerably diminished, and now they were limited to the number required to bring troops from South Africa from time to time.

Mr. CALDWELL said this was a vague and general answer which conveyed no information whatever. It was at this time more than any other that there was likely to be waste. There was an item of £719,900 for hired transports, and the Committee expected a little information regarding it. How many hired transports had they on hand?

Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER said the actual number of hired transports was two. If more were required at a later stage they would be hired.

Mr. CALDWELL: Exactly, but why could you not give us that information when it was asked? Now perhaps you can tell us whether the cost is £1 per ton per month.

Mr. BRODRICK said he kept the most careful watch on the use of these transports. They had an enormous number of moves going on as between South Africa, the Mediterranean, and this country early in the year. That caused a very heavy charge for transports. There were at the beginning of the year about thirty transports employed; but, as the Secretary to the Admiralty had stated, the number was now reduced to two.

Mr. BUCHANAN thought it high time that Parliament should be informed as to the rate at which transports were hired for service during the war. A categorical promise was given by Lord Goschen at the beginning of the war that the information should be furnished when the war was concluded.

MR. WHITLEY said the right hon. Gentleman had not given a satisfactory answer to the question of sea transports. The item they were now asked to vote was three times the amount normally required. How was it that so long after the conclusion of the war there should be these swollen figures? What they were anxious for was that as soon as possible they might get back to the normal figures in this respect.

MR. BRODRICK said he had already explained that an enormous number of moves had taken place this year. The War Office had hardly got credit for what they had done since the close of the war. They had discharged 160,000 men since the war ended. There was no one in the House more interested than himself in economic administration. When they further reduced the Estimates the figures referred to would be much lower.

MR. BUCHANAN said the Committee should get some information as to the rates at which the transports were hired. It was in February, 1900, Lord Goschen, who was then First Lord of the Admiralty, stated that at the conclusion of the war full particulars would be furnished in regard to the chartering of ships.

MR. BRODRICK said the Admiralty had not the slightest objection to give these particulars in a Parliamentary Return.

MR. LOUGH asked what the charge of £70,000 for the China expedition was based on. Did it apply entirely to last year? If so it did not seem to him to be a satisfactory way of keeping the accounts. He thought there was plenty of time, when the Estimates were being prepared, to get some particulars from India as to the exact amount. When he turned to the Somaliland charges he found the amount was £170,000. That seemed to him the cost of a little war itself. Was that the total item for Somaliland, and might the Committee assume that no more money would be wanted? What were the chief heads of the expenses here?

MR. BRODRICK: The sea transport charges, to which the hon. Gentleman called attention, were payments made when the transports were discharged. The proceeds of the sale of animals were, of course, larger at the end of a war than in a normal year. In regard to the two expeditions in China and Somaliland, transport and remounts involved the largest portion of this charge. He would welcome the day when it was possible to bring the Indian troops from China and place them on the charge of India; but the hon. Member would understand that, seeing the trouble had so recently subsided in the portions of China where those troops were, the Government must not be asked to come to too precipitate a decision on the subject. They had, however, reduced the troops to one quarter of the former number.

MR. LOUGH asked what force there was at present in China.

MR. BRODRICK said he thought there were about 3,200 men. Then, as regarded the Somaliland Vote, the same answer applied as to the China Vote.

MR. CALDWELL said he did not see why they should have 3,000 men in China. There were at one time 700 or 800 men at Shanghai, and they all knew that the French, German, and British troops had gone away from that place. Then, in Peking, there was only the normal garrison for guarding the Embassy, which could not amount to more than 500 at the outside. It must be useful to the Government to know that the Germans had three or four times the number of officers at Peking and Tient-sin the British had, so that they would be able to fill up details at once on an emergency.

*MR. WEIR said he would like to know where our forces in China were stationed. The last time he was in Shanghai there were very few British troops.

MR. BRODRICK said that if the hon. Member were to go there again he would find some British forces in Shanghai and some in Hong-Kong.

*MR. WEIR said that the new barracks at Hong-Kong would not be finished for two or three years yet. The right hon Gentleman was not purposely misleading the Committee, but it would be well if he were to mark, learn, and inwardly digest what had been said, and see that the officials at the War Office furnished him with accurate information. As the representative of Ross and Cromarty, he did not come there to vote hundreds of thousands of pounds, aye millions, without any information.

MR. CALDWELL said if the Secretary for War included the troops in Hong-Kong he might make up 3,000; but he would inform the right hon. Gentleman that Hong-Kong was not part of the expedition to China. It was a British settlement and was under the Colonial Office. He hoped the Secretary for War would look up the matter, and discriminate between the expenditure which belonged to the British colony of Hong-Kong, and that which related to the China expedition. The Vote was far too large for the British force which was in China.

Vote agreed to.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £1,822,000, be granted to His Majesty, to defray the Charge for Clothing Establishments and Services, which will come in course of payment during the year ending on the 31st day of March 1904."

*SIR CHARLES DILKE said he did not propose to raise the question of wages at the Pimlico Clothing Establishment, but there was one grievance there which he was quite certain ought to be looked into by the War Office. A circular had recently been issued by the Home Office in regard to sanitary accommodation in factories, and he was certain that the accommodation of that description at Pimlico was below the Home Office standard.

LORD STANLEY said that inquiry was being made into this matter, and if the sanitary accommodation at Pimlico was below the standard, steps would be taken to remedy it.

*MR. CKOOKS (Woolwich) said that in the case of contractors who infringed the fair wages Resolution of the House, the Department was always willing to receive a deputation on the subject from the trade union. He saw no reason why the same course should not be followed in regard to the men, and the women, who were in an even more unfortunate position—namely, those employed in Government factories. The employees in the Pimlico factory should be allowed to make their grievances known direct to the War Office through the medium of the trade union organization. He knew the arrogance of the overseers and foremen towards the workmen. He had a letter from an employee in the Pimlico factory who had made an appeal to the overseer, and he was referred to "Bill Crooks to answer it." No official had the right to answer a workman's request in that manner.

MR. BRODRICK said he quite saw what the hon. Member desired, but the rule of the Government had always been, and he hoped it always would be, to deal direct with its own employees. The Government, he hoped, was a good employer, and they had every desire to give good employment, and deal fairly with their workpeople. But the Government had never given any recognition to the idea that outside intermediaries should come in between them and those whom they employed. Such a course, he thought, would not tend either to smooth working, or to a good understanding between employer and employed in Government service. He could assure the hon. Member that if the men or women were dissatisfied they were perfectly free to ventilate their grievances, and to approach the authorities on the matter, and he would take care that they would not be penalised for doing so.

*MR. CROOKS said that that was a very unsatisfactory statement by the right hon. Gentleman, and he begged to move that the Vote be reduced by £100. The right hon. Gentleman said that these poor people in the factories need have no fear in making complaints; but he could give twenty cases in which the overlookers or foremen said to the workmen, "You can complain if you like, but if you do, bear in mind that we shall remember you." Was not that coercion? He had always found that the people who had been paid at the lowest rate of wages lacked moral courage. That had been taken out of them long ago; and they should be allowed to make their representations through their unions.

Motion made, and Question put, "That a sum not exceeding £1,821,900 be granted for the said Service."—(*Mr. Crooks.*)

Sir FORTESCUE FLANNERY (Yorkshire, Shipley) said he wished to put it to the Secretary for War that, in his reply to the hon. Member for Woolwich, he did not at all deal with the logical point which the hon. Member had raised. That point was, why did the officers of State and the members of the Government receive deputations from outside combinations of workmen in respect of alleged contraventions of the regulations by contractors who employed the workmen, but refused to receive similar deputations from those who had adopted the grievances of workmen in the direct employment of the Government. He awaited with considerable interest and with an entirely open mind the explanation of his right hon. friend.

Mr. BRODRICK said the distinction between the two cases which the hon. Member for Woolwich had raised was this: Those employed in the service had a right to approach the heads of the Department direct; whereas, the workers under contractors, who might be doing other business outside Government business, had no right of access to the Government. In the latter case, if a representation was made to the Government, they called on the contractors for an explanation as to whether the rules which this House had set up had been observed. In the former case, they looked after their own workmen.

Mr. KEARLEY (Devonport) said he would let a little daylight into this matter. The right hon. Gentleman, said the Government would not allow any outside interference between it and its employees But what was the channel of communication between the Government employees and the Government? It was by petition, and these petitions were sent in year by year, and the men were led to suppose that they would receive a prompt reply. The Committee would probably be surprised to know that that was not acted upon in any sense. He knew of a petition which had been sent in, in 1902, to which no reply had yet been given, and when he addressed a question last week to the Secretary to the Admiralty on the subject, the only satisfaction he got was that the matter was still being considered. The only opportunity the workpeople in Pimlico had of ventilating their grievances was by sending in petitions, and the right hon. Gentleman ought to make inquiries into the matter He was glad to see the Secretary to the Admiralty present.

The CHAIRMAN: Order, order! This is not an Admiralty Vote.

Mr. KEARLEY said that the only way these workpeople had to ventilate their grievances was by petition.

Mr. BRODRICK asked if the hon. Gentleman suggested that the Pimlico petition was disregarded.

Mr. KEARLEY said yes, absolutely. No reply had been given to the petition, and he should be glad to know if the right hon. Gentleman intended to remedy that state of affairs. He thought the Committee ought to have a definite pledge that replies would be given to such petitions.

*Mr. SHACKLETON (Lancashire, Clitheroe) said he wished the right hon. Gentleman would consider that this was a matter which had been recognised by employers of labour throughout the country. This House recognised over thirty years ago the right of workpeople to organise in the only way possible, namely, by appointing men in whom they had confidence to lay their case before the employers. In this case the employer was the War Office; and surely the right hon. Gentleman would not deny that these workpeople had a perfect right to appoint the man whom they considered best able to present their case to the officers appointed by the right hon. Gentleman to investigate it. The attitude of the right hon. Gentleman was most inconsistent. He stated that the applications for work were more numerous than the employment necessitated. That was the whole secret of the situation, and that was why the right hon. Gentleman ignored the trades union representative. The action of the

Government was altogether wrong, and ought not to be tolerated. Trades unionists throughout the country would not read with pleasure the refusal of the right hon. Gentleman to receive a trades union representative. He hoped his hon. friend would take a division.

MR. REGINALD LUCAS said he felt bound to associate himself with the views of the hon. Gentleman the Member for Devonport, because his experience was much the same as that of the hon. Gentleman. He, however, was persuaded that the Government did not desire to deal unfairly with their employees; and in that respect he differed from the hon. Gentleman. He thought, however, that the Government did not appreciate the difficulty of employees in putting their case forward. The Government should remember that it was not easy for the men to be their own advocates. They were very often, if he might say so, inarticulate, and found it very difficult to state their own case, although he entirely exonerated the Government from trying to take an unfair advantage of their employees.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER said he desired to state that the hon. Member for Devonport was under an entire misapprehension. There was no disinclination on the part of Government employees to place their views before a particular Department. It was stated that there had been some delay, but that, he believed, was also a misapprehension. Perhaps hon. Members were not aware of the volume of petitions received by Government Departments. Their consideration involved immense detail, and it could not be expected that an immediate answer could be given to them.

MR. KEARLEY said that six months was a fair time in which to receive an answer.

THE CHAIRMAN: I called the hon. Member for Devonport to order for discussing the question of Admiralty employees; now the hon. Gentleman the Secretary to the Admiralty is answering the hon. Gentleman the Member for Devonport, but it is quite out of order on this Vote.

Mr. Shackleton.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER said he understood that the hon. Gentleman the Member for Portsmouth had alluded to the matter.

THE CHAIRMAN: No, the hon. Member did not refer to Admiralty employees, but to Government employees generally.

SIR JOHN GORST (Cambridge University) was surprised to hear that it was the settled policy of the Department not to allow employees to make representations through third parties. He thought such a policy objectionable on two grounds. In the first place, it was not just, and in the second place, it was inexpedient. The Government employed a great number of extremely poor workers, particularly in the clothing factory, many of whom were women, and they could not make the best of their case when brought face to face with military people and officials in high places. There was no better way of preventing the springing up of disputes than the bringing in of third persons, who could take a calm and impartial view of the situation. It was foolish of the Government not to allow their workpeople to make representations to them through their own trade union officials.

*MR. HERBERT SAMUEL (Yorkshire, Cleveland) said that a grave matter of principle was involved, and the problems which were presented by the relations between the State and its employees would not be rendered less difficult or delicate by refusing to recognise trade unionism. A few years ago the House of Commons passed a Resolution which asserted the principle that the Government should be a model employer of labour. Certainly no employer of labour could be regarded as a model employer who refused to treat with trade union representatives. The principle of collective bargaining was at the root of the settlement of all industrial difficulties. In many industries, certainly in the great industries in the North of England, employers preferred that the men should be trade unionists. The right hon. Gentleman now set up a principle which had been rejected by every progressive employer of labour throughout the country. The right hon. Gentleman said that he refused to negotiate with workmen through the medium of third parties. In the next breath he said that he was ready to receive representations on behalf of the workmen from Members of Parliament. How could the right hon. Gentleman distinguish between the two cases? No doubt it was necessary to have military discipline in the case of those who were to serve in the field. But these ideas of discipline that reigned at the War Office ought not to be applied to its Civil establishments. The doctrine which the right hon. Gentleman had enunciated would be an encouragement to every reactionary employer of labour throughout the country.

COLONEL SANDYS said he could not agree with the argument which had been advanced by the hon. Gentleman who had just spoken; and he confessed he was very much surprised at the views put forward by the right hon. Gentleman the Member for Cambridge University. He was glad his right hon. friend the Secretary of State for War had taken up the position he did on that occasion. It was quite refreshing in these days to hear of a Minister having sufficient courage to say that he would not allow any outside interference with his Department. In no Department of the Government should any outside interference of any sort or kind be allowed. The curse of the country at the present time was trade union agitation; and he hoped that his right hon. friend would adhere to the position he had taken up.

MR. EMMOTT (Oldham) said that the hon. Member who had just spoken had not perhaps had much experience of trade disputes. If he had had such experience, he would not have made the speech he had just delivered. He entirely agreed with the hon. Member for Portsmouth that the Government were not trying to get the better of their employees. He could not conceive any Government being so stupid as to attempt that. With reference to collective bargaining, he confessed from his own experience that he would rather deal with a trained negotiator than with a man appointed, so to speak, *ad hoc* to represent the case of his fellow workmen. It was not that there might be any inability to state the case, but the trained negotiator knew when to give way, and realised when the argument against him was sensible. The untrained negotiator did not know when to give way, or when sense and reason were with the other side; and he went into the negotiation prepared to say practically what was put into his mouth. He was convinced that the Government, if proper safeguards were adopted, would achieve more satisfactory results if they negotiated with the man appointed by the workpeople than by adopting the unfortunate method which led to such a long continued war in connection with the Penrhyn quarries.

MR. DALZIEL (Kirkcaldy Burghs) said he thought the thanks of the Committee were due to the hon. Member for Woolwich for raising what was after all one of the most important questions connected with Government Departments. So far as he understood it, it resolved itself into a question of trades unionism or no trades unionism. He regretted very much the speech of the hon. and gallant Gentleman opposite. The hon. and gallant Gentleman advised the Government to stand against the interference of anyone connected with trades unions. He would be very much surprised if the hon. and gallant Gentleman delivered such a speech to his constituents. The question they had to consider was that the workpeople believed, rightly or wrongly, they could not place their grievances before the heads of the Department. The facts in the present case were that the petition was presented last September, and that, up to the present, no reply had been received. His point was that the present system was not successful. If the right hon. Gentleman would adopt the suggestion that the men themselves should appoint a spokesman that might meet the difficulty. He did not think the right hon. Gentleman was unsympathetic but he was a busy man; and it was impossible for him to examine into the details of various branches of his Department. If the Resolution of the

House was to be effective no bar should be placed in the way of complaints as to its failure being investigated. He would suggest that the right hon. Gentleman might meet the complaint by ordering a special inquiry into the difficulty of presenting grievances.

MR. BRODRICK said there never was the slightest difficulty about the employees of the War Office seeing the heads of the Department.

MR. DALZIEL said the right hon. Gentleman had made a statement that the Pimlico Clothing Factory workpeople could appoint from among themselves a deputation which he was willing to receive. Was that the case?

MR. BRODRICK: I said there had never been the slightest difficulty in the employees of the War Office approaching the heads of the Department.

MR. DALZIEL said that in reply to a communication the right hon. Gentleman had indicated his willingness to consider any complaints of the employees which might be forwarded through the proper channels, but he declined to recognise their union as the intermediary. His claim was that the union ought to be recognised.

MR. BRODRICK: The letter also states that I would see any individual employees.

MR. DALZIEL said he was content to rest his case on the words "I must decline to recognise the union or receive any deputation which may purport to convey the views of the members." Surely the employees were the best judges as to how and by whom they wished their grievances to be represented. The issue now really was—"trades unions, or no trades unions."

SIR J. FERGUSSON hoped the Committee would support the right hon. Gentleman in the position which he had taken up, and which was in accordance with the universal practice of the Government. The only logical course open to the right hon. Gentleman was to decline to allow outsiders to come in and interfere with the organisation of a Government Department, and hon. Members would surely support him in that.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE said the attitude of the War Office and that of the Post Office was totally indefensible, and it was impossible to maintain it. Scarcely a year in the last twenty-seven had passed in which he had not discussed grievances with the employees in the Army Clothing Department. They had real grievances, and there was serious difficulty in putting them before the Secretary of State. The majority of the employees were poor women, not of a class who were able to state their grievances. If any skilled lady inspector of factories could see the employees she would be able to bring the case before the right hon. Gentleman in a way it had not been brought up to the present time.

MR. REGINALD LUCAS said the principle of allowing the employees themselves to put their grievances forward was a right one, and he thought the Government ought to be supported in the position they had taken up.

MR. BROADHURST (Leicester) said the idea of being willing to see individuals but not persons representing them, was the old ground taken up by the most determined opponents of labour combination and organisation. It was not the policy adopted in all Government Departments. For instance the Commissioner of Works was in constant communication with a powerful trades-union of which he was a member.

MR. BRODRICK: Surely not with regard to the wages paid to its own permanent employees.

MR. BROADHURST said the communications had reference to the conditions of work, hours, etc., and that indirectly at any rate affected labour. The War Office was the last Department in the world that should take unto itself any air of superiority in any way whatsoever. He had himself had a long experience in connection with the Army Clothing Department. He had been associated with the grievances of the employees for more than thirty years, mostly in the days when he was Parliamentary Secretary to the Trades Union Congress and when Mr. Childers was Secretary of State for War. He once arranged a deputation with that right hon. Gentleman in the old Conference room, and after listening to the women for about ten minutes, Mr. Childers begged leave to withdraw, and begged him to make any terms possible with the workers in that particular Department. The attitude now taken up by the Secretary for War was one which must prevent the administrative work of a Department being successfully carried on, and he hoped the Government as a whole did not accept the right hon. Gentleman's views.

Mr. BRODRICK said that if the members employed in the Army Clothing Department had reason to complain and made their complaints through the proper channels—through their own superior officer—he was ready to see them. But he was not ready to recognise unions of the workers.

*Mr. HERBERT SAMUEL: Why not?

Mr. BRODRICK: The Government never has dealt with any of its employees —postmen, policemen, soldiers or sailors through a union.

*Mr. HERBERT SAMUEL said the right hon. Gentleman by quoting the cases of soldiers, sailors, and policemen was simply confusing the issue, because they stood in an entirely different position from ordinary working people. The right hon. Gentleman had frequently stated that he would not receive a deputation from an outside organisation, but he had not yet given any reasons for adopting this attitude.

Colonel LOCKWOOD (Essex, Epping), while thoroughly agreeing with the Secretary of State for War in regard to this question, suggested that he should avail himself of the services of one of the women factory inspectors who should inquire into the conditions of employment of women in the Pimlico factory.

Mr. KEARLEY pointed out that in the case which had been quoted in which the Chief Ordnance Officer refused to receive a deputation from the union, it was simply a union of Government employees. The right hon. Gentleman had said he would be very glad to see individuals or bodies representing those individuals, and in this case why not receive the representatives of the individuals' union. Did the right hon. Gentleman make any differentiation? Did he merely refuse to receive outside unions or did he also refuse to receive representatives of unions of any kind whatsoever?

Mr. DALZIEL hoped the right hon. Gentleman would be prepared to make some small concession and thus avoid a division. Why not adopt the suggestion of the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean, backed up by the recommendation of the hon. and gallant Member for the Epping Division, and appoint an independent lady inspector to hear the grievances of these women and ascertain the cause of the dissatisfaction which existed as to the presentation of grievances. Let the enquiry even be confidential, if desired. If the right hon. Gentleman refused to adopt that suggestion the case was hopeless.

Mr. PRIESTLEY (Grantham) said they heard a great deal now-a-days about the necessity of introducing business-like methods into their administration. They were all agreed that the trades union movement in this country had been most serviceable to the men, and a useful means of getting rid of friction between employers and employed. Why should not the War Office, in its own interest, try to utilise this method of dealing with the grievances of its employees. If it had some antiquated notion about improper interference, it was most stupid. The course which had been followed was stupid, and it was time to have done with stupidity. Why did not the War Office utilise to the best of their ability the lessons which the common sense of the country had taught in the matter of trade disputes? The classes who had no power to speak for themselves were the least represented, and Government offices and Departments ought to have some consideration for those who could not help themselves. He hoped some guarantee would be given that in this little matter the affairs of the War Office would be conducted on the lines of common sense and business.

MR. PIERPOINT (Warrington) thought there was a great difference between receiving a trade union deputation from outside the Pimlico factory and receiving a deputation from inside, because in the latter case although it might be a trade union deputation yet it would be a deputation of the men themselves, who, as far as he knew, were perfectly at liberty to form a union inside the factory, and had a reasonable right to be received. He would be inclined to agree with his right hon. friend in refusing to receive a deputation from inside the factory were it not for the fact that there was frequently the most inordinate delay in getting replies from the War Office. The right hon. Gentleman had not explained why no reply had been given to the representation made last October.

*MR. CREMER (Shoreditch, Haggerston) joined in the appeal to the Secretary of State to reconsider his decision. It was practically impossible for these poor women to address the right hon. Gentleman; they would tremble in his presence, and be practically dumb. It was only natural that they should desire to have some one used to putting their grievances before the proper authorities. The principle was allowed in the Law Courts; everybody was there allowed to employ an advocate, and all these people asked was that they should be allowed to appoint anyone they pleased as their advocate. It was a right for which trades unions had always contended and which he had hoped had been settled long ago, but it appeared that the battle would have to be fought over again. Scores of cases could be cited in which terrible disasters had resulted from the narrow-minded plea now advanced by the right hon. Gentleman, and many instances had come under his own notice in which, the good sense of the employers having recognised the right of the trades unions to plead the cause of their members, serious struggles had been averted. It was always to the interest of the representatives of trades unions to avoid strikes in order to guard the funds of the unions. Leaders did not make strikes, but strikes made leaders. He sincerely hoped the right hon. Gentleman would concede the point for which they were contending.

MR. LYTTELTON (Warwick and Leamington) thought a middle course might be found which would be acceptable to the Government. He understood the Government objection was to suffer the interference of a large trade union outside their employment, and that he could understand, because a trade union might have some object of their own to gain. But there could not be any reason at all against allowing a deputation from within the employment. He should think the employees would be able to appoint a deputation of their own who could sufficiently represent their grievances. He understood that that was conceded. If, then, any body of employees were not able to represent their case clearly and adequately, there ought not to be any rigid rule which would prevent the right hon. Gentleman and the employees agreeing upon some person to speak on the latter's behalf.

MR. CROOKS said the hon. and learned Member had stated the case admirably, but it was just that which the right hon. Gentleman had refused to grant. The words of the right hon. Gentleman were—

> "I am prepared to consider any complaints of the employees which may be forwarded through the proper channel, or to listen to any individual who asks to see me through his immediate superior, but I must decline to recognise the trade union as an intermediary, or to receive a deputation which may purport to convey the views of its members."

MR. LYTTELTON asked what trade union was referred to.

MR. CROOKS said it was the Union of Government Workers—people actually in the employment of the Government. If the right hon. Gentleman would consent to receive a deputation of the union, what had now taken him ten months to consider, without arriving at any decision, could be settled in ten minutes.

MR. BRODRICK said the hon. Member for Woolwich and the hon. and learned Member for Warwick were at variance on the very point upon which he was at variance with the proposal which had been made. If any individual, or any deputation, or any body of workmen wished to make representations to him they were perfectly at liberty to do so at any time. He could imagine a case in which a body of workpeople would be unable to speak for themselves and required a spokesman, and he thought there would be no difficulty in arranging for such a case. But what hon. Members opposite desired was that he should recognise what was practically the intervention of an outside union representing other unions—("No").

MR. SHACKLETON thought the right hon. Gentleman had not stated the case fairly. What they wanted was that these women or any other body of Government employees should have the right to appoint one of the officials connected with their union—which was entirely composed of Government workers—to represent their case. The official of the union might possibly not be working for the Government; he might have retired from the service; but by constant contact with the workpeople he would be better acquainted with the facts as a whole than any individual workman could be. The society with which he was connected consisted of 100,000 workpeople, of whom 60 per cent. were women, and during the last ten years the employers of Lancashire had never refused him a hearing on behalf of the women. He failed to see why the Government should not recognise the same principle.

MR. DUKE (Plymouth) understood his right hon. friend to agree as to the desirability of any body of workmen being allowed to select a representative of their own in the service of the Department to approach the head of the Department. The Secretary of State had also stated that if through defective education, sex, or other cause, they were unable to state their case properly, he had no objection to assistance being given. That being so, he failed to see what more was required.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes 47; Noes 118. (Division List No. 207.)

AYES.

Barran, Rowland Hirst
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Broadhurst, Henry
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burt, Thomas
Caldwell, James
Cawley, Frederick
Cremer, William Randal
Dalziel, James Henry
Delany, William
Devlin, Joseph (*Kilkenny, N.*)
Dewar, John A. (*Inverness-sh.*
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Doogan, P. C.
Emmott, Alfred
Fuller, J. M. F.
Griffith, Ellis J.
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-
Hayter, Rt. Hon. Sir Arthur D.
Helme, Norval Watson
Henderson, Arthur (*Durham*)
Kearley, Hudson E.
Levy, Maurice
Lough, Thomas
Lucas, Reg'ld J. (*Portsmouth*)
M'Arthur, William (*Cornwall*)
M'Laren, Sir Charles Benjamin
Moss, Samuel
Murphy, John
O'Brien, P. J. (*Tipperary, N.*)
O'Mara, James
Partington, Oswald
Priestley, Arthur
Redmond, William (*Clare*)
Roberts, John Bryn (*Eifion*)
Rose, Charles Day
Russell, T. W.
Samuel, Herbt. L. (*Cleveland*)
Sinclair, John (*Forfarshire*)
Soares, Ernest J.
Spencer, Rt. HnC. R. (*Northants*
Sullivan, Donal
Ure, Alexander
Weir, James Galloway
White, Luke (*York, E.R.*)
Whitley, J. H. (*Halifax*)
Wilson, Henry (*York, W. R.*)

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Mr. Crooks and Mr. Shackleton.

NOES.

Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Atkinson, Right Hon. John
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Balfour, Rt. Hn. G. W. (*Leeds*
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Butcher, John George
Campbell, J. H. M (*Dublin Univ.*
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, V. C. W. (*Derbysh.*)
Cecil, Evelyn (*Aston Manor*)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J. (*Birm.*
Chamberlain, Rt Hn. J A (*Worc.*
Charrington, Spencer
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Colomb, Sir John Charles Ready
Corbett, T. L. (*Down, North*)
Craig, Charles Curtis (*Antrim S.*
Cranborne, Viscount
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Davenport, William Bromley
Dickson, Charles Scott
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers
Duke, Henry Edward
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Faber, E. B. (*Hants, W.*)
Faber, George Denison (*York*)
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Ed.
Fergusson, Rt Hn. Sir J. (*Manc'r*
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
Fitzroy, Hon. Edward Algeron
Forster, Henry William
Fyler, John Arthur
Gordon, Hn. J. E. (*Elgin & Nrn.*
Gordon, J. (*Londonderry, S.*)
Gore, HnG. R. C. Ormsby- (*Salop*
Greene, Hy. D. (*Shrewsbury*)
Greene, W. Raymond (*Cambs*
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Hamilton, Rt Hn Ld. G (*Midx*
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Heath, Arthur H. *Hanley*)
Heath, James (*Staffords., N. W.*
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
Hogg, Lindsay
Kemp, Lieut.-Colonel George
Kennaway, Rt. Hon. Sir J. H.
Keswick, William
Law, Andrew Bonar (*Glasgow*
Lawson, J. Grant (*Yorks., N.R.*
Lee Arthur H (*Hants. Fareham*)
Lees, Sir Elliott (*Birkenhead*)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N. S.
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowther, C. (*Cumb. Eskdale*)
Lyttelton, Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
M'Arthur, Charles (*Liverpool*)
M'Killop, Jas. (*Stirlingshire*)
Majendie, James A. H.
Maxwell, W. J. H. (*Dumfriessh.*
Milvain, Thomas
Morgan, D. J. (*Walthamstow*)
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Murray, Rt. Hn A Graham (*Bute*
Murray, Charles J. (*Coventry*)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (*Bath*)
Myers, William Henry
Palmer, Walter (*Salisbury*)
Parkes, Ebenezer
Percy, Earl
Pierpoint, Robert
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
Reid, James (*Greenock*)
Remnant, Jas. Farquharson
Renwick, George
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. C. Thomson
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Rutherford, John (*Lancashire*)
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sandys, Lt.-Col. Thos. Myles
Scott, Sir S. (*Marylebone, W.*)
Seely, Maj J. E. B. (*Isle of Wight*
Shaw-Stewart, M. H. (*Renfrew*
Sinclair, Louis (*Romford*)
Smith, Abel H. (*Hertford, E.*)
Smith, James Parker (*Lanarks.*)
Smith, Hn. W. F. D. (*Strand*)
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Hon. A. (*Ormskirk*)
Stanley, Lord (*Lancs.*)

Mr. Duke.

Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
Talbot, Lord E. (*Chichester*)
Thornton, Percy M.
Tollemache, Henry James
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. E. M.
Valentia, Viscount
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt. Hon. Sir W. H.
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Anstruther.

Original Question put, and agreed to.

CIVIL SERVICES AND REVENUE DEPARTMENTS (SUPPLEMENTARY) ESTIMATES, 1903–4.

CLASS VII.

£8,000, Visit of the President of the French Republic.

MR. LOUGH thought they had some right to complain of the neglect of the House of Commons in this matter. He wished to know how many tickets were placed at the disposal of the Government for the Opera-house, and why some of the tickets were not placed at the disposal of Members of the House of Commons.

MR. WHITLEY thought the Committee should get more details of the item of £8,000. It was a mistake to put down a lump sum and give absolutely no details as to what the money was spent on. He asked the Secretary to the Treasury to give in round figures particulars of this sum.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. ELLIOT, Durham) said that the accounts had not been absolutely made up, but, roughly, it might be said that for the Office of Works for preparing York House, painting, etc., the sum was £1,800; for the Lord Chamberlain's Department for upholstering £2,300; for the Lord Steward for Buckingham Palace expenses and the Opera-house £2,500; and the Master of the Horse £400; troops lining the streets, £1,000.

MR. WHITLEY said it was satisfactory to receive these rough figures subdividing the Vote. He hardly thought the money should have been spent without getting some permanent value for it. Would any portion of this expenditure save similar expenditure in the future?

MR. ELLIOT: Anything unexpended will be surrendered to the Exchequer. I do not think I can give any further information.

MR. LOUGH said he would like to know how many tickets for the opera were placed at the disposal of Members of the House of Commons.

Vote agreed to.

£123,334, Ireland Development Grant.

MR. O'MARA (Kilkenny, S.) appealed to the Chief Secretary to give a portion of the money to assist in the construction of the railway from Castlecomer mine to Kilkenny. That railway would confer permanent benefit on the district through which it ran, and also on the adjoining districts.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND said the hon. Member had referred to a project in his own constituency, but he need hardly say that the Irish representatives had all projects in their own districts. He could make out an excellent case for every penny of the money being spent in County Clare. It would not be possible to do much this year, but next year or the year after, when there would be some money to spend, they could consider what should be done with it.

Vote agreed to.

ARMY (EXCESSES) 1901-2.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That a sum, not exceeding £100 be granted to His Majesty, to make good Excesses of Army Expenditure beyond the Grants, for the year ending on the 31st day of March, 1902."

Mr. WHITLEY said that if the Government had any regard for economy and improved methods of checking expenditure, they ought not to bring on a Vote of this kind at that hour of the morning and at that period of the session. He must say he was amazed when he looked into the Report of the Comptroller and Auditor-General on the accounts at the end of last financial year, that the Committee was not given a fuller opportunity of discussing and considering it. It would be quite sufficient to show the great seriousness of the matters concealed under this Report by calling the attention of the Committee to a few headings. For instance, the Auditor-General drew attention to the circumstances attending participation in fraud; to frauds at Aldershot connected with the payment of wages; to charges for transport insufficiently vouched; to irregularities in accounts; to imperfect vouching, etc. In one case the number of accounts which ought to have been furnished was sixty-three, but only thirteen had been returned, and of these some were of little value. He maintained that this Vote—which involved several millions of pounds—should not be carried through *sub silentio* and without full and satisfactory explanation by those responsible; and he begged to move the reduction of the Vote by £99.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the sum of £1 be granted for the said service."—(*Mr. Whitley.*)

*__Sir A. HAYTER__ said he quite agreed with the hon. Member that it was very unsatisfactory that the Reports of the Public Accounts Committee, who fully examined these accounts, and of the Auditor-General had not been brought before the House of Commons as was recommended by the National Expenditure Committee. The fact was that it was exceedingly difficult to carry on war expenditure by Estimates, and the War Office must be allowed considerable latitude. Many of the accounts referred to by the hon. Member had been carefully examined by the Public Accounts Committee, who were of the unanimous opinion, and recommended to the House, that a total Vote should be granted in order to make up deficiencies.

Mr. WHITLEY said that before presenting the matter to the Committee he had taken the precaution of submitting it to the Chairman of the Public Accounts Committee; and he thought that the Report of the Public Accounts Committee called for some statement from the Government as to the action that would be taken to prevent similar irregularities in the future.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 25; Noes, 116. (Division List No. 208.)

AYES.

Barran, Rowland Hirst
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Caldwell, James
Cawley, Frederick
Cremer, William Randal
Dalziel, James Henry
Dewar, John A. (*Inverness-sh.*)
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Emmott, Alfred
Griffith, Ellis J.
Helme, Norval Watson
Levy, Maurice
M'Laren, Sir Charles Benj.
Moss, Samuel
O'Brien, P. J. (*Tipperary, N.*)
Partington, Oswald
Priestley, Arthur
Samuel, Herbt. L. (*Cleveland*)
Shackleton, David James
Sinclair, John (*Forfarshire*)
Soares, Ernest J.
Sullivan, Donal
Weir, James Galloway
White, Luke (*York, E. R.*)

TELLERS FOR THE AYES
Mr. Whitley and Mr Lough.

NOES.

Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Atkinson, Right Hon. John
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (*Man'r*
Balfour, Rt. Hn. G. W. (*Leeds*
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Campbell, J. H. M. (*Dublin Univ*
Cavendish, V C W (*Derbysh.*)
Cecil, Evelyn (*Aston Manor*)
Chamberlain, Rt Hon J (*Birm*
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J A (*Worc*
Chapman, Edward
Charrington, Spencer
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Colomb, Sir John Charles Ready
Corbett, T. L. (*Down, North*)
Craig, Charles Curtis (*Antrim, S*
Cranborne, Viscount
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Davenport, William Bromley
Dickson, Charles Scott
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers
Duke, Henry Edward
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Faber, E. B. (*Hants, W.*)
Faber, George Denison (*York*)
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Ed.
Fergusson, Rt Hn Sir J. (*Manc'r*
Fitzroy, Hon. Edward Algernon
Forster, Henry William
Fyler, John Arthur
Gordon, J. (*Londonderry, S.*)
Gore, Hn G. R. C. Ormsby- (*Salop*
Greene, Hy. D. (*Shrewsbury*)
Greene, W. Raymond (*Cambs*
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Hamilton, Rt. Hn. Ld. G. (*Mid'x*
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-
Hayter, Rt Hon Sir Arthur D.
Heath, Arthur H. (*Hanley*)
Heath, James (*Staffords., N. W.*
Hogg, Lindsay
Kemp, Lieut.-Colonel George
Kennaway, Rt. Hon. Sir J. H.
Keswick, William
Law, Andrew Bonar (*Glasgow*
Lawson, John Grant (*Yorks, NR*
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N. S.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowther, C. (*Cumb. Eskdale*)
Lucas, Reg'ld J. (*Portsmouth*)
Lyttelton, Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
M'Arthur, Charles (*Liverpool*)
M'Arthur, William (*Cornwall*)
M'Killop, Jas. (*Stirlingshire*)
Majendie, James A. H.
Maxwell, W. J. H (*Dumfriessh.*)
Milvain, Thomas
Morgan, D. J. (*Walthamstow*)
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Murray, Rt. Hn A. Graham (*Bute*
Murray, Charles J. (*Coventry*)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (*Bath*)
Nolan, Col. John P. (*Galway, N.*
Palmer, Walter (*Salisbury*)
Parkes, Ebenezer
Peel, Hn Wm. Robert Wellesley
Percy, Earl
Pierpoint, Robert
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
Reid, James (*Greenock*)
Remnant, Jas. Farquharson
Renwick, George
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. C. Thomson
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Rutherford, John (*Lancashire*)
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Scott, Sir S. (*Marylebone, W.*)
Seely, Charles Hilton (*Lincoln*)
Seely, Maj. J. E. B. (*Isle of Wight*
Sinclair, Louis (*Romford*)
Smith, Abel H. (*Hertford, E.*)
Smith, James Parker (*Lanarks.*
Smith, Hn. W. F. D. (*Strand*)
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Hon, Arthur (*Ormskirk*
Stanley, Lord (*Lancs.*)
Sturt, Hn. Humphrey Napier
Talbot, Lord E. (*Chichester*)
Thornton, Percy M.
Tollemache, Henry James
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. E. M.
Ure, Alexander
Valentia, Viscount
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt. Hn. Sir Wm. H.
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—
Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Anstruther

Original Question put, and agreed to.

Resolutions to be reported this day; Committee to sit again this day.

SUGAR CONVENTION [EXPENSES AND DUTIES].

Resolution reported—"That it is expedient to authorise the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of a share of the expenses of the Permanent Commission and of any expenses in connection with the attendance of delegates at the Commission, which may be payable under any Act of the present session to make provision for giving effect to a Convention signed the 5th day of March, 1902, in relation to sugar. That the duties payable under Section 2 of the Finance Act, 1901, or any Act amending the same, shall be taken on the delivery of any article from any factory or refinery, which in pursuance of any Act of the present session is made subject to the supervision of the Commissioners of Customs or Commissioners of Inland Revenue, and shall be the same as those payable on the like articles on importation."

Resolution read a second time.

Motion made, and Question put, "That this House doth agree with the Committee in the said Resolution."

The House divided:—Ayes, 106; Noes, 28. (Division List No. 209.)

AYES.

Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (*Man'r*
Balfour, Rt. HnGeraldW(*Leeds*
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Campbell, J. H. M. (*Dublin Univ*
Cavendish, V. C. W. (*Derbyshire*
Cecil, Evelyn (*Aston Manor*)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J. (*Birm.*
Chamberlain, RtHn. J. A. (*Worc*
Chapman, Edward
Charrington, Spencer
Cochrane, Hon. T. H. A. E.
Colomb, SirJohnCharles Ready
Corbett, T. L. (*Down, North*)
Craig, CharlesCurtis(*Antrim, S*
Cranborne, Viscount
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Davenport, William Bromley
Dickson, Charles Scott
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers
Duke, Henry Edward
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Faber, E. B. (*Hants, W.*)
Faber, George Denison (*York*
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Ed.
Fitzroy, Hon. EdwardAlgernon
Forster Henry William
Fyler, John Arthur
Gordon, J. (*Londonderry, S.*)
Gore, HnG. R. C. Ormsby-(*Salop*
Greene, Hy. D. (*Shrewsbury*)
Greene, W. Raymond (*Cambs*
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Hamilton, Rt. Hn. Ld. G. (*Mid'x*
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Heath, Arthur H. (*Hanley*)
Heath, James(*Staffords. N. W.*)
Hogg, Lindsay
Kennaway, Rt. Hon. Sir J. H
Keswick, William
Law, Andrew Bonar (*Glasgow*
Lawson, JohnGrant(*YorksNR.*
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, FrederickN. S.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter(*Bristol, S*
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowther, C. (*Cumb. Eskdale*)
Lucas, Reg'ld J. (*Portsmouth*)
Lyttelton, Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
M'Arthur, Charles (*Liverpool*)
M'Killop, James (*Stirlingshire*
Majendie, James A. H.
Maxwell, W. J. H. (*Dumfriessh.*
Milvain, Thomas
Morgan, DavidJ(*Walthamstow*
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Murray, RtHn A. Graham(*Bute*
Murray, Charles J. (*Coventry*)
Murray, Col. Wyndham (*Bath*
Palmer, Walter (*Salisbury*)
Parkes, Ebenezer
Peel, Hn. Wm. R. Wellesley
Percy, Earl
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
Reid, James (*Greenock*)
Remnant, Jas. Farquharson
Renwick, George
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. Chas. Thomson
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Rutherford, John (*Lancashire*)
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Scott, Sir S. (*Marylebone, W.*)
Seely, MajJ. E. B. (*Isle of Wight*
Smith, Abel H. (*Hertford, E.*)
Smith, Jas. Parker (*Lanarks*)
Smith, Hn. W. F. D. (*Strand*)
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Hon. A. (*Ormskirk*)
Stanley, Lord (*Lancs.*)
Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
Talbot, Lord E. (*Chichester*)
Thornton, Percy M.
Tollemache, Henry James
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. E. M.
Valentia, Viscount
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, RtHn. SirWilliam H.
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Wortley, Rt. Hn. C. B. Stuart
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George

Tellers for the Ayes—
Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Barran, Rowland Hirst
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Caldwell, James
Cawley, Frederick
Cremer, William Randal
Dalziel, James Henry
Dewar, John A. (*Inverness-sh.*)
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Emmott, Alfred
Griffith, Ellis J.
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Chas. Seale
Hayter, Rt. Hon. SirArthur D.
Helme, Norval Watson
Kemp, Lieut.-Colonel George
Levy, Maurice
M'Arthur, William (*Cornwall*
M'Laren, Sir Chas Benjamin
Moss, Samuel
Nolan, Col. JohnP. (*Galway, N.*
O'Brien, P. J. (*Tipperary, N.*)
Partington, Oswald
Priestley, Arthur
Samuel, Herbert L. (*Cleveland*
Shackleton, David James
Soares, Ernest J.
Weir, James Galloway
White, Luke (*York, E.R.*)
Whitley, J. H. (*Halifax*)

Tellers for the Noes—
Mr. Lough and Mr. Ure.

BOARD OF AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES BILL [LORDS.]

[Second Reading.]

Order for Second Reading read.

*Mr. AILWYN FELLOWES (Huntingdonshire, Ramsey), in moving the Second Reading of this Bill, said the object of the measure was to transfer to the Board of Agriculture the powers and duties relating to sea and inland fisheries now carried out by the Board of Trade. The Board of Trade welcomed the Bill, and the Board of Agriculture were perfectly willing to undertake the duties and to do everything they could on behalf of so important a class, and to encourage and develop the fishing industry. The question to be dealt with related to the encouragement of production of food, and therefore comes within the province of the Agricultural Department. It was believed that the methods which had made the Board of Agriculture more and more useful to the farming industry would be useful also to the great fishing industry of the country. The fisheries were already under the Department of Agriculture in Holland, Germany, Belgium, Ireland and Canada. The transfer was to take place on October 1, and, subject to the approval of the Treasury, the duties would be carried out by an assistant secretary of the Board of Agriculture, with a separate department altogether, under whom there would be two inspectors, one for fresh water and the other for sea fisheries. The Bill was strongly supported by the whole of the fishing industry, and he hoped the House would now give it a Second Reading.

Motion made, and Question proposed "That the Bill be now read a second time."

Mr. DALZIEL (Kirkcaldy Burghs) said the hon. Gentleman had made a very clear statement of the objects and intentions of the Bill, and if the representatives of other Departments followed his example they would be much more likely to get their measures passed than by endeavouring to rush them through without explanation or debate. He had placed on the Paper a Motion for the rejection of the measure, mainly because he had little confidence in the manner in which many of the duties of the Board of Agriculture were discharged. It should be remembered that by this Bill duties were to be handed over to a Department not directly represented in the House of Commons, and upon which, therefore, it was difficult to exercise legitimate pressure. He understood, however, that there was a general feeling on the part of the industry principally concerned in favour of the Bill, and therefore he would not move his Amendment.

Question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed for to-morrow.

SALE OF BUTTER BILL.

Order for consideration, as amended (by the Standing Committee) read and discharged. Bill withdrawn.

POOR LAW (DISSOLUTION OF SCHOOL DISTRICTS AND ADJUSTMENTS) BILL.

Read the third time and passed.

PUBLIC WORKS LOANS [REMISSION OF DEBT].

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

Resolved, That it is expedient to authorise the remission of a certain debt due to the Public Works Loan Commissioners by the Port Seton Harbour Commissioners in pursuance of any Act of the present session relating to Local Loans.—(*Mr. Elliot.*)

Resolution to be reported to-morrow.

IRELAND DEVELOPMENT GRANT BILL.

As amended, considered; to be read the third time to-morrow.

NAVAL WORKS BILL.

Read the third time, and passed.

NAVAL WORKS (PORTSMOUTH BARRACKS SITE) BILL.

Order for Second Reading read, and discharged:—Bill withdrawn.

MARRIAGES LEGISLATION BILL.

Read a second time, and committed for to-morrow.

CIVIL SERVANTS (RETIREMENT AT THE AGE OF SIXTY-FIVE).

Copy ordered, "of Treasury Minute, dated the 30th day of July, 1903, stating the circumstances under which certain Civil Servants have been retained in the service after they have attained the Age of Sixty-five; and of the Return therein referred to."—(*Mr. Elliot.*)

POST OFFICE (CONTRACT FOR ACCELERATED MAIL SERVICE TO AND FROM IRELAND *via* CARLISLE, STRANRAER, AND LARNE).

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Contract, dated the 8th day of November, 1902, with the Glasgow and South Western Railway Company, the Portpatrick and Wigtownshire Joint Committee, and the Belfast and Northern Counties Railway Company, for an Accelerated Mail Service to and from Ireland *via* Carlisle, Stranraer, and Larne, printed in Parliamentary Paper, No. 56, of session 1903, be approved." —(*Mr. Elliot.*)—Debate arising.

Debate adjourned till this day.

BOARD OF AGRICULTURE AND FISHERIES [SALARIES, ETC.].

Committee to consider of authorising the payment, out of moneys to be provided by Parliament, of any Salaries and Expenses which may become payable under any Act of the present session to transfer to the Board of Agriculture powers and duties relating to the Industry of Fishing, and to amend the Board of Agriculture Act, 1889 (King's Recommendation signified), this day.—(*Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes.*)

Whereupon, in pursuance of the Order of the House of the 28th day of July, Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House without Question put.

Adjourned at five minutes after One o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Tuesday, 4th August, 1903.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Crystal Palace District Gas Bill. The Chairman of Committees informed the House that the promoters did not intend to proceed further with the Bill. Ordered that the Bill be not further proceeded with.

Bristol Corporation Bill [H.L.]; Maryport Harbour Bill [H.L.]; Manchester Corporation Bill [H.L.]. Commons Amendments considered and agreed to.

Kingston upon-Hull Corporation Bill. Read 3ª, with the Amendments; further Amendments made; Bill passed, and returned to the Commons.

Dover Corporation Bill. Read 3ª, with the Amendments, and passed, and returned to the Commons.

Croydon and District Electric Tramways Bill. Reported, with Amendments.

Rothesay Corporation Order Confirmation Bill; Scottish Episcopal Clergy Widows' and Orphans' Fund Order Confirmation Bill. Read 3ª (according to Order), and passed.

Education Board Provisional Order Confirmation (London) Bill [H.L]; Gas and Water Orders Confirmation Bill [H.L.]. Commons Amendments considered (according to Order), and agreed to.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

SMALL HOLDINGS ACT, 1892.

Return showing, from the commencement of the Small Holdings Act (1st October, 1892) to the 31st December, 1902—(*a*) the extent of land acquired by local authorities under the Act, with the date of such acquisitions, and the parish or parishes in which the land is situate; (*b*) the sum for which the land was purchased, or the term and rent for which it was hired; (*c*) the amount spent on the adaptation of land for small holdings; (*d*) the number and total acreage of small holdings sold, with the amount of purchase money; (*e*) the number and total acreage of small holdings let, with the yearly rent and terms of letting; and (*f*) the number and total amount of advances made under Part II. of the Act; Ordered to be laid before the House.—(*The Earl Waldegrave, for the Earl of Onslow.*)

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES.)

No. 3049.	France (Nice).
No. 3050.	Brazil.
No. 3051.	Egypt (Port Said and Suez).

SHIPPING CASUALTIES.

Shipping casualties which occurred on or near the coasts, or in rivers and harbours, of the United Kingdom, from 1st July, 1901, to 30th June, 1902; and shipping casualties which occurred to British vessels elsewhere than on the coasts of the United Kingdom, and to foreign vessels on or near the coasts, or in rivers and harbours, of British possessions abroad, reported during the same period; with charts and appendices.

MERCHANT SHIPPING ACT, 1894.

Return of all British ships ordered by the Board of Trade or its officers, during the period from 1st July, 1902, to 30th June, 1903, to be provisionally detained as unsafe by reason of the defective condition of their hulls, equipments, or machinery, or by reason of overloading or improper loading, in pursuance of the provisions of Section 459 of the Act, giving the names of the owners of those ships which have been dismantled, broken up, or converted into hulks, etc.; also of all foreign ships ordered to be provisionally detained during the same period as unsafe by reason of overloading or improper loading, in pursuance of the provisions of Section 462 of the same Act; together with summaries showing respectively the total number of ships ordered to be detained as unsafe, from 1st July, 1902, to 30th June, 1903, and since the 1st October, 1876, distinguishing between those cases in which the ships were found safe or unsafe (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper [Cd. 1233]).

INLAND REVENUE.

Forty-sixth Report of the Commissioners of His Majesty's Inland Revenue, for the year ended 31st March, 1903.

INDIA (RAILWAYS).

Administration Report on the railways in India for 1902.

Presented (by Command), and ordered to lie on the Table.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT, 1888.

Part I. Orders under Section 57 of the Act, as confirmed by the Local Government Board, of the following County and County Borough Councils :

Carmarthen. For constituting portions of the parishes of Llandybie and Bettws the parish of Ammanford Urban and the Ammanford Urban District.

Carmarthen. For constituting a portion of the parish of Pembrey, the parish of Burry Port Urban, and the Burry Port Urban District.

Essex. For uniting to the parish of Witham and the Witham Urban District an area formerly known as "Faulkbourne Parish (detached No. 1)."

Ipswich (County Borough). For uniting the parishes of St. Mary-at-the-Tower, St. Margaret, St. Helen, St. Clement, St. Mary-at-the-Quay, St. Stephen, St. Lawrence, St. Peter, St. Mary Stoke, St. Nicholas, St. Mary-at-Elms, St. Matthew, Warren House, Shire Hall Yard, Westerfield-in-Ipswich, Rushmere, and Whitton-cum-Thurlston to form the parish of Ipswich.

Lancaster. For constituting the township of Bispham-with-Norbreck the Bispham-with-Norbeck Urban District.

Northampton. For defining the boundary between the parishes of Fotheringhay and Warmington in the Oundle Union.

Southampton. For uniting the parishes of St. Mary's Extra and Sholing to form the parish of Itchen.

Salop. For transferring portions of the parishes of Hadley, Wellington (Rural), and Wrockwardine, in the Wellington (Salop) Rural District, to the parish of Wellington Urban and the Wellington (Salop) Urban District.

Part II. Orders under Section 59 of the Act, as confirmed by the Local Government Board, of the following County Councils :

Essex. For amending the County of Essex (East Ham) Confirmation Order, 1900.

Kent. For amending the County of Kent (Bexley and East Wickham) Confirmation Order, 1902.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

SMALL HOLDINGS ACT, 1892.

Return respecting; laid before the House (pursuant to order of this day), and to be printed. [No. 192.]

COUNTY COURTS JURISDICTION EXTENSION BILL.

Reported from the Standing Committee with Amendments. The Report thereof to be received on Thursday next; and to be printed as amended. [No. 186.]

FERTILISERS AND FEEDING STUFFS BILL [H.L.].

A Bill to amend the law with respect to the sale of agricultural fertilisers and feeding stuffs: Was presented by the Viscount Templetown; read 1^{a}; to be printed; and to be read 2^{a} on Friday next. [No. 187.]

ADDENBROOKE'S HOSPITAL BILL.

[SECOND READING.]

Order of the Day for the Second Reading read.

VISCOUNT CROSS: My Lords, the scheme to be confirmed by this Bill has been prepared by the Charity Commissioners, at the request of the General Court of Governors of Addenbrooke's Hospital, Cambridge, after a public inquiry held in the Guildhall. The object is to establish a responsible executive elected by the Governors, and charged with the administration of the Hospital. The committee to be elected is to be representative of the Governors resident in the borough, the University, and the surrounding counties, respectively. The scheme defines the mode of election, the powers, and the duties of the committee. The scheme provided by the Act of 1766, under which the Hospital is now administered, gives the management to the Governors at large, and there is no authority for the appointment of an executive committee. The institution has now about 650 Governors, and it has outgrown the limits within which the existing mode of government is efficient. This is a Bill that is agreed to by all parties, and I hope your Lordships will give it a Second Reading.

Moved, that the Bill be now read 2^a^, (*Viscount Cross*).

On Question, Bill read 2^a^, and committed to a Committee of the whole House on Thursday next.

LICENSING ACTS (SCOTLAND) CONSOLIDATION AND AMENDMENT BILL.

On the Order being read for the House going into Committee on this Bill,

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR SCOTLAND (Lord BALFOUR of BURLEIGH) said: My Lords, in moving that the House go into Committee on this Bill, I will take the opportunity of answering a Question which the noble Earl opposite (the Earl of Camperdown) put to me on the Second Reading, in regard to the possibility of allowing burghs between the limits of 4,000 and 7,000 population to be represented upon the Appeal Courts. I have again very carefully considered this matter, which was discussed at great length, and, I think, very carefully threshed out in another place. I am entirely unable to agree to the proposal that these burghs should be directly represented upon the Appeal Courts. The reason for making the concession in the case of Royal and Parliamentary burghs between the limits of 4,000 and 7,000, and allowing them to maintain their licensing authority is this, that they have already, so to speak, a sort of vested interest in that authority, and it seemed hard to deprive an urban community of between 4,000 and 7,000 of a privilege which they greatly valued. As the Bill was first introduced the limit was 7,000, but, after full discussion, we agreed in another place to lower the limit to 4,000 in the case of the Royal burghs which already enjoyed licensing powers. At the present time they have no representation and no power at all in the Appeal Court, so that the Bill takes nothing from them. There is nothing of the nature of a vested interest even in the most narrow sense of the term, and to make the change proposed would enormously complicate the machinery of the Bill, and would, I think, destroy to a large extent the symmetry of the Appeal Court as at present constituted. I have had an interview to-day with the representatives of the Convention of Royal Burghs and I am willing to make a concession at a subsequent stage. If noble Lords will look at Section 5, Sub-section 1, a proviso will be found at the end which prevents representatives of these Royal burghs from voting both for the constitution of the county licensing Court and of the Appeal Court. As they have licensing Courts of their own it is obviously right that they should be debarred from exercising any authority in regard to the county licensing Court; but at a subsequent stage I will put down an Amendment which will allow the County Council representatives to take part in the selection of the Appeal Court. By that arrangement I hope it will not be improbable that at times their representatives will be actually sent to the Appeal Court, so that these burghs will have under that Amendment a fair chance of being represented by someone who is actually sent by the constituent body to the County Council.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN: I am obliged to the noble Lord for having considered the matter. Probably the suggestion he has just thrown out is as far as he can go. As I stated on the Second Reading, I do not myself propose so move in the matter; but it seemed ttrange that a body which was an independent licensing authority should have no representation, direct or indirect, upon the Appeal Court. If the matter had been inquired into from the very beginning I should have advised my noble friend not to give the concession contained in the Bill with regard to these small licensing bodies. I do not myself see the very great difference between a Royal burgh with a population of 4,000 and a police burgh; and, as the noble Lord knows, the police burghs have complained most bitterly, and have pointed out that they in turn ought to be licensing authorities. With that I do not at all agree, and I should not have disagreed with my noble friend if he had struck the others out also; but as they are licensing authorities I am glad he is going to give them some indirect representation on the Appeal Court.

House in Committee (according to order).

Clause 1.

THE EARL OF ABERDEEN explained that the object of his first Amendment was to substitute the word "Authorities" for "Courts" in Clause 1, which enacted that—

> "For the purpose of granting certificates under this Act, there shall annually be held throughout Scotland, in lieu of the general half-yearly meetings held under the existing Acts, two general half-yearly meetings of the licensing Courts to be constituted as hereinafter provided."

His Amendment might appear, at first sight, to be a merely verbal Amendment, but it was more than that. He thought that possibly the expression "Court" substituted for the well-recognised and well-understood designation "licensing authority" might lead to misapprehension. A Court in the strict sense of the word could only receive evidence in the legal acceptation of the term, but the practice—and he thought it was a very poor practice—in deciding upon licences was for those who constituted the body to be influenced, not only by the actual evidence placed before them, but by their own personal knowledge of the district and its requirements. Misgiving had been expressed that in some way the new term "Court" might indirectly hamper the full discretion of those who had to adjudicate upon these matters.

Amendment moved:—

> "In page 1, line 10, to leave out the word 'Courts' and to insert the word 'authorities.'"—(*The Earl of Aberdeen.*)

LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH: I sincerely hope the noble Earl will not press his Amendment. I do not agree with him that "authority" is the more generally accepted term. It may be that at the present time "authority" is, strictly speaking, the legal term, but the word "Court" is used invariably in describing the proceedings in newspaper reports and, certainly, in all volumes of judicial statistics, and in all other documents dealing with the proceedings of these bodies. I think there is a certain advantage in giving dignity to the proceedings of these bodies. Though I quite agree that they are not bound by the law of evidence in the same strict way that purely judicial Courts are, I do think there is some advantage in giving them the legal title, which they have practically always borne. It would make a considerable change in the Bill if I were to accept this Amendment. I really do not think there is much substance in the objection, and I hope it will not be pressed.

THE EARL OF ABERDEEN said he was glad to hear the statement of the noble Lord that there was no idea of in any way restricting the freedom of the licensing justices. After what the noble Lord had said, he did not feel disposed to press his Amendment.

Amendment, by leave of the House, withdrawn.

Clause 1 agreed to.

Clause 2.

THE EARL OF ABERDEEN moved an Amendment to place all burghs with a population of 4,000 on the same footing. Clause 2 provided that—

> "For each burgh, being a county of a city, and for each Royal, Parliamentary, or police burgh containing a population of or exceeding seven thousand, and for each burgh containing a population under seven thousand but of or exceeding four thousand the magistrates of which have power to grant certificates under

the existing Acts, there shall be a separate licensing Court, consisting of the magistrates of such burgh for the time being."

He moved to delete the words "containing a population of or exceeding seven thousand, but of or exceeding four thousand." Police burghs were just as much entitled to consideration in these matters as Royal burghs. The object of his Amendment was to place all burghs with a population over 4,000 on the same footing in the matter of licensing. In Clause 2 there was at present a distinction. He did not think there could be any danger in his Amendment, because it was subject to the proviso that only burghs, wherein the magistrates had already power to grant licences under existing Acts, should have the power proposed by the Amendment. In fact, it was simply a further recognition of the powers they already possessed. Burghs with populations of over 4,000, even though not Royal burghs, should be on the same footing. He thought this would certainly meet a feeling which existed in Scotland. He was the more disposed to advocate this change because it partook of the spirit, at least, of local option, because in most cases the magistrates referred to would be elected by the people of the district, and in that way the latter would have a voice in this matter.

Amendment moved—

"In page 1, line 13, to leave out from the word 'burgh' to the word 'the' in line 15."—(*The Earl of Aberdeen.*)

LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH: The Amendment which the noble Earl has placed on the Paper would go a great deal further than he suggests, because it would not limit the licensing authorities or Courts to police burghs above 4,000 in population. It would give a Court to every Royal, Parliamentary, or police burgh, and that, of course, is an Amendment which could not be accepted at this stage; and I am afraid I could not meet the noble Lord even if he proposed to limit it to police burghs above 4,000. The only reason in the case of Royal burghs for cutting down the limit to 4,000 was that they had exercised that authority for a considerable number of years, and it would be hard to take it away from them. If the Amendment were agreed to it would cause more discontent than if the Bill were left in its present form.

Amendment, by leave of the House, withdrawn.

Clause 2 agreed to.

Clauses 3 and 4 agreed to,

Clause 5.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN said his Amendment to this clause was of a purely drafting character, its object being to get rid of the word "retiral." The word might have appeared in other Acts of Parliament, but he hoped it had not; but, if it had, that was no reason why they should perpetuate so objectionable a word. He had seen the word used in Scottish newspapers occasionally, but he hoped the House would not elevate it to the dignity of being placed in an Act of Parliament. He suggested the substitution of the word "retirement."

Amendment moved—

"In page 4, lines 12 and 23, to leave out the word 'retiral' and to insert the word 'retirement.'"—(*The Earl of Camperdown.*)

LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH: There is no doubt that the word "retiral" does appear in several Scottish Acts. I believe it to be good Scotch for retirement, in spite of what the noble Earl says; but "retirement," perhaps, tells its own tale to the average reader of an Act of Parliament better than the word "retiral," and if the noble Earl presses his Amendment I have no objection to accepting it.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN: I certainly do press it.

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Clause 5, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 6 to 9 agreed to.

Clause 10.

LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH: I propose to insert an Amendment in this clause for the purpose of allowing the urban community known as Anstruther Easter and Anstruther Wester, along with Kilrenny and Pittenweem to retain their licensing authority. The three burghs first mentioned are absolutely contiguous. They form one urban community. Their interests are the same, the population is of the same character, and there is no division between them by a county district. There is a short distance between them and Pittenweem, but there, again, the population is of an entirely similar character. I think it would be a wise concession to the feeling of this community to allow them to retain their licensing Court.

Amendment moved—

"In page 10, line 28, after Sub-section (1.) (c.) to insert as a new sub-section the words: (*d.*) 'The Royal burghs of Kilrenny, Pittenweem, Anstruther Easter and Anstruther Wester shall be deemed to form one Royal burgh, and the magistrates of the said burghs shall be deemed to be the magistrates of the burgh so formed, and the meetings of the licensing Court for such burgh shall, except as otherwise appointed by the Court, be held in the Royal burgh of Anstruther Easter, and the town clerk of the Royal burgh of Anstruther Easter shall be clerk to the licensing Court; and'"—(*Lord Balfour of Burleigh.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Clause 10, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 11.

LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH: This is really little more than a formal Amendment. Its object is to enable cases to be dealt with at the October Court as well as at the April Court.

Amendment moved—

"In page 11, line 26, to leave out the words 'next ensuing' and to insert the words 'or half-year next ensuing as the case may be.'"—(*Lord Balfour of Burleigh.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Clause 11, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 12 to 16 agreed to.

Clause 17:

LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH: This is an Amendment asked for by the officers of Inland Revenue, and it is obviously a proper one.

Amendment moved—

"In page 14, line 23, to leave out the words 'to any party' and to insert the words 'to any officer of Inland Revenue without payment, and to any other person.'"—(*Lord Balfour of Burleigh.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Clause 17, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 18 to 30 agreed to.

Clause 31.

LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH: I propose at the beginning of this clause to insert a new sub-section. At present a good deal of abuse has occurred owing to the power to transfer at any period of the year simply by a certificate of two justices. It is now proposed that transfers, except in the event of death and bankruptcy and other contingencies, shall only take place at the half-yearly Court. As the Bill at present stands, it may be thought that they can only take place annually. The effect of this Amendment is to make it quite clear that such transfers may take place in October as well as in April.

Amendment moved—

"In page 20, line 17, at beginning of clause, to insert as a new sub-section the words (1) 'A licensing Court may at any October half-yearly meeting grant to a new tenant or occupant a transfer of any certificate then subsisting for any house or premises as aforesaid.'"—(*Lord Balfour of Burleigh.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Clause 31, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 32.

Consequential Amendment agreed to.

Clause 32, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 33 to 40 agreed to

Clause 41.

LORD KINNAIRD proposed to add a sub-section to Clause 41, with a view to giving the licensing authorities power to make by-laws for regulating or preventing the employment of barmaids. The Glasgow magistrates some time ago made a condition in granting certain licences that young women should not be employed. Subsequently some licence-holders thought the magistrates had exceeded their powers, and eventually it was decided that the publicans were right, and that the magistrates had gone beyond the powers vested in them. He thought that the licensing authority should have the power of suggesting to licence-holders that it might not be desirable that women should be employed by them. The system has been tried largely in the United States, and, so far as their case was analogous to ours, there had not been any objection raised to it by those interested in the employment of women. There was not a sufficient number employed in licensed premises to make the proposal a hardship, because there were very many other occupations for young women to which the objection did not hold.

Amendment moved—

> " In page 24, line 31, after the word 'necessary' to insert as a new paragraph the words: (*g*.) 'For regulating or preventing the employment of barmaids.' "—(*Lord Kinnaird.*)

LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH: I am afraid I cannot accept this Amendment. I do not know that I should differ from the noble Earl that in certain circumstances and in certain environment the employment of young women on licensed premises may be undesirable, but having regard to the habits and customs which exist among us, to legislate in the manner suggested would be an unwarrantable interference with persons who manage a legitimate business in a legitimate way.

It is perfectly true that the magistrates of Glasgow endeavoured to make a regulation on the subject under the existing law, but, as a matter of fact, it was found to be illegal for them to do so. Before the Court of Appeal gave their decision on the point the magistrates of Glasgow in their effort to regulate this matter had landed themselves in an utterly impossible and illogical position There are many restaurants in Glasgow where there can be no possible objection to women being employed. In some of these customers help themselves and pay at the door, and the establishments are of a perfectly respectable character, and eminently suited for the employment of women. There is hardly a restaurant, I should think, in which women are not employed as waitresses. I believe the Glasgow magistrates found themselves in this position ultimately, that they managed to regulate the employment of women so far as to prevent their employment behind the bars, where they were really kept to themselves, but they did not manage to do it in those very places where the girls went about among the customers. When one considers the difficulties of the situation and the illogical position, there is nothing to be said for this proposal. As the proposal stands, it would not do. There was a Question asked in another place whether a widow could be a barmaid, and I should like the noble Lord to address his mind to that question. The noble Lord said it was undesirable for young women to be so employed. At what age would he regard such employment as proper? There are all sorts of questions of this kind, and I think the unfortunate Secretary of State for Scotland, who would have to sanction by-laws for the purpose under this Amendment, would find himself in an undesirable situation. I hope the Amendment will not be pressed, on the grounds I have stated.

Amendment, by leave of the House, withdrawn.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN asked the noble Lord in charge of the Bill if he would explain Sub-section (C.), of Clause 41, which provided that a licensing Court might make by-laws—

> " For requiring all wines and spirits kept by a grocer within licensed premises to be sold in corked or stoppered bottles, vessels, jars, or casks, but the by-law shall not apply to licensed premises where no groceries are kept or sold, and where a *bona fide* wholesale business in excisable liquors is carried on."

The first half of the sub-section he understood perfectly, and, so far as he was able to judge, it seemed all right;

but what was the meaning of the provision that the by-law should not apply to licensed premises where no groceries were kept or sold? He presumed that these premises were premises separated from the other by partitions, or in some other way, where liquors only were sold. This question of grocers selling liquors was a very debatable one. If grocery was not their business, and if the sale of excisable liquors was, it was very desirable that they should be under the same regulations as ordinary publicans. They had always been told that the object of giving grocers these licences was to enable them to sell liquor in corked or stoppered bottles, or in certain other measures only, and that it was for that purpose the grocers' licences were chiefly valuable. He would like an explanation from the noble Lord of this sub-section.

LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH: I can easily give the explanation for which the noble Earl asks. In the first place, nothing under this by-law would apply to publicans; it would be confined entirely to those who worked under grocers' licences. A good deal of complaint has been made, and I think justly made, in the Majority and Minority Reports of the Licensing Commission and in the Report of the Grocers' Licences Commission, of abuses in connection with the working of these certificates. When grocers were given certificates to deal in excisable liquors, it was never intended that they should sell what is called loose spirits in an open jug; but the custom of doing so has grown up, and it was found not capable of being stopped under the existing law. This Bill will stop it. The reason for the exemption is this, that there are two classes of places which work under grocers' licences, but which are in no sense grocers' shops. Those wholesale places in which blending is carried on, often by the same person who may have the grocers shop, but in premises separated from those in which he carries on his grocery business, are worked under grocers' licences, and very often wine merchants work to a large extent under one form of grocers' licence. I think that if there is no business of the nature of a grocer carried on in the same premises as the blending of spirits or the sale of spirits, there seems no reason for putting the holder of that certificate under the same restrictions under the by-law.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN said he quite understood the noble Lord's point with regard to blending. But the grocer, under this sub-section, would be able, in the separate premises, to sell liquor in small quantities, which was the thing the noble Lord said a moment before was so objectionable. He must say he thought publicans had good reason to complain with regard to grocers' licences, and he thought an arrangement of the sort proposed in the clause would enable grocers to trench even more than at present on the trade of the licensed victuallers.

LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH: I think not. Wherever a grocer's business is carried on corked or stoppered bottles will be required. There can be no open sale of wines and spirits. We have not, however, included beer, because we thought it only right that a jug of beer might be fetched from grocers' shops.

Clause 41 agreed to.

Clauses 42 to 47 agreed to.

Clause 48.

LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH: This is an Amendment which has been suggested by the Inland Revenue, and the provision more properly applies to the Excise Act than to this Act. The same provision is in the Inland Revenue Acts, and there is no reason for repeating it here.

Amendment moved—

"In page 28, line 24, to leave out from the words 'in calculating' to the word 'disregarded' in line 25.'"—(*Lord Balfour of Burleigh.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Clause 48, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 49 to 54 agreed to.

Clause 55.

Lord BALFOUR of BURLEIGH: This clause is inserted to allow a dealer in spirituous liquors to give out small quantities on a medical certificate, or on a certificate by the procurator fiscal, if wanted for any medical purpose. The clause as it stands would only deal with hours on ordinary days that public-houses are closed. It is proposed by the Amendment to allow the same process to be gone through on Sundays, public holidays, and other days when public-houses are closed.

Amendment moved—

"In page 30, line 32, to leave out the words 'at any prohibited hour of any day' and to insert the words 'at any time when such giving out and supply would be otherwise illegal.'"—(*Lord Balfour of Burleigh.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Lord BALFOUR of BURLEIGH: The next Amendment makes sure that the licensing Court knows what is going on under this clause.

Amendment moved—

"In page 30, line 39, at end of clause to insert the words 'the procurator fiscal shall transmit a list of such orders received by him, showing the names and descriptions of all persons signing the same during the current half-year, to the clerk of the licensing Court seven days before the day fixed for each half-yearly meeting of such Court.'"—(*Lord Balfour of Burleigh.*)

On Question., Amendment agreed to.

Clause 55, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 56 to 70 agreed to.

Clause 71.

Lord BALFOUR of BURLEIGH: This clause provides that—

"Where a person is convicted of any offence mentioned in the First Schedule to the Inebriates Act, 1898, the Court may, either in addition to or in substitution for any other penalty, order the offender to find caution for good behaviour for any period not exceeding six months, and under a penalty not exceeding twenty pounds."

The object of my Amendment is to add, at the end of this section, the words contained in the Amendment.

Amendment moved—

"In page 38, line 28, at end, to insert the words 'and in default of such caution being found to be imprisoned for a period not exceeding thirty days.'"—(*Lord Balfour of Burleigh.*)

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

Clause 71, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 72 agreed to.

Clause 73.

Earl RUSSELL said it would be in the recollection of the House that when the Motor-Cars Bill was before their Lordships he moved an Amendment which would have had the effect of making other vehicles subject to the same provisions as applied to motor-cars under that Bill. On that occasion the noble Lord in charge of the Bill, Lord Balfour of Burleigh, took objection on the ground that as the Bill was limited to motor-cars, it would not be well to extend it to other vehicles on the highway. He (Earl Russell) recognised the force of that objection, and did not press his Amendment. But their Lordships would be very much surprised to find that in Clause 73 of this Bill, which was for the object of consolidating and amending Licensing Acts, there was an Amendment of the marriage and divorce law of Scotland. He submitted that this was a very inconvenient mode of procedure, and that it would be far better that this clause should be brought up, if if it was a desirable clause, in the proper way, when attention could be directed to it. He submitted that it was a very inconvenient course to choose a Bill of this character to amend the marriage and divorce laws of Scotland. He noticed that the clause was a new one added after the Bill had been introduced, and he hoped that the noble Lord would be able to see his way to withdraw it and let it be brought up as a separate Bill on its merits.

Amendment moved—

"To leave out Clause 73."—(*Earl Russell.*)

Lord BALFOUR of BURLEIGH: I see no reason for omitting this clause. As a matter of fact, it was not in the Bill as introduced; but so strong a feeling was developed in favour of Scotland following the precedent of England that the Lord Advocate in another place agreed to accept the clause. It was inserted, I think, unanimously by the Standing Committee, and passed, I believe, without objection in the other House. It is following the precedent of the English Act of last year, and I think the noble Earl will see that it is sufficiently germane to the subject with which we are dealing to make habitual drunkenness a cause for judicial separation. I am informed that it is considered equal to cruelty in actions dealing with judicial separation and divorce in Scotland. I can hold out no hope of giving way on the point.

Amendment, by leave of the House, withdrawn.

Clause 73 agreed to.

Clauses 74 and 75 agreed to.

Clause 76.

Consequential Amendment agreed to.

Clause 76, as amended, agreed to.

Clauses 77 to 91 agreed to.

Clause 92.

LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH: This is the last Amendment upon which I shall have to trouble the House with any observations, and it is one of some substance, and, I venture to think, of some importance. In the Standing Committee in the House of Commons a Motion was carried to close all refreshment rooms at railway stations at the same hours as public-houses and grocers' shops, and against that the Government representatives voted, but they were beaten by the narrow majority of one, the numbers being 17 to 16. The decision of the Standing Committee was reversed on Report stage in the other House. It was an open Division, Government tellers not being employed, and by a considerable majority the exemption was inserted. The railway interest, for what that is worth, was divided upon the matter, and I have come to the conclusion not to ask this House to reverse the decision then come to as a whole. I think that probably there is a certain convenience to those who are really travelling by rail that they should get refreshments earlier and later than the ordinary opening hours of public-houses. But then there is the question of Sundays. Rightly or wrongly there is Sunday closing all over Scotland for all public-houses, with the exception of hotels. It has been so for close on fifty years, and, whatever may be noble Lords' opinions of it as affecting England, there is no body of opinion in Scotland, at present, at any rate, in favour of reversing that state of matters. I am sure it will be obvious to your Lordships that if the licensed premises on every railway station are to be open on Sundays, there will be a very serious risk of breaches of the law and of scenes of disturbance occurring. I suppose anyone who bought a railway ticket for a penny to go to the next station would be entitled to be served in the railway refreshment bar. If, as we propose, all clubs are to be dealt with under this Bill, and all public-houses will be closed, our railway stations, especially in large towns, would not be particularly orderly on Sunday afternoons. I venture to think that the right thing to do is to close these places on Sundays. I am quite sure that to do so will be in conformity with public opinion in Scotland. I am informed that within five miles of the centre of Glasgow there are no less than fifty-three railway stations at which intoxicating liquors could be sold on Sundays if this proposal were not made. It would to a large extent nullify the good which I hope to get from this Bill if the Amendment is not accepted, and I trust, therefore, that there will be no opposition to it.

Amendment moved—

"In page 49, line 3, after the word 'to' to insert the words 'days or'; and in line 4, after the word 'time' to insert the words 'on any day other than Sunday.'"—(*Lord Balfour of Burleigh.*)

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN was glad that the noble Lord proposed to move this Amendment. He thought it would be a great improvement upon the

Bill as it stood, and that it would meet with general approval in Scotland. It had appeared in the evidence taken before the Licensing Commission that a very favourite way of getting drink on Sundays was to take a penny ticket at a railway station and either to travel to the station to which the ticket conveyed the holder and there obtain drink, or remain in perpetual waiting in the refreshment room at the first station for the train by which it was never intended to travel.

On question, Amendment agreed to.

Clause 92, as amended, agreed to.

Remaining Clauses agreed to.

First Schedule agreed to.

Second Schedule amended and agreed to.

Third to eighth Schedule agreed to.

Ninth Schedule amended and agreed to.

Remaining Schedules agreed to.

Bill reported with Amendments to the House: Standing Committee negatived.

The Report of Amendments to be received *To-morrow*; and Bill to be *printed* as amended.

POST OFFICE SITES BILL.

Read 2a (according to order), and *committed* for *Thursday* next.

LONDON EDUCATION BILL.

Amendments *reported* (according to order.)

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (the Marquess of LONDONDERRY): I have two Amendments to the first schedule standing in my name, and it may be as well that I should say a few words in explanation of the reason why they have been put down. Paragraph 9, of the first schedule was inserted in the House of Commons on the Motion of Mr. Haldane. The provision, however, in its present form is not quite complete, inasmuch as it does not deal with the case where the number of the governing body of an institution is limited. In such a case it will probably be convenient that the members of the governing body appointed by the local education authority should be additional members. The Amendments will make this possible.

Amendments moved—

"In the first schedule, paragraph 9, page 4, line 16, to leave out the words 'qualifications required by' and to insert the words 'provisions of'; and in line 17, after the word 'institution' to insert the words 'imposing any limit on the number of the members of the governing body or requiring any qualification for those members'; and to leave out the word 'to' and insert the words 'as respects."—(*The Marquess of Londonderry.*)

On Question, Amendments agreed to.

THE MARQUESS OF LONDONDERRY: Sub-section 11 provides that the managers of all public elementary schools shall not be appointed for a longer period than three years, at the end of which period they shall be eligible for re-appointment. The object of my Amendment is to limit the operation of the sub-section to managers of public elementary schools provided by the local education authority. The provision should not apply to voluntary schools, whose managers should be left to be appointed under the Trust Deed or under Orders made under Section 11 of the Act of last year. The effect of the Amendment is to make the necessary limitation. I trust that this will meet an Amendment moved at an earlier stage by the Bishop of Hereford. The grammar of the paragraph as it originally stood was not very satisfactory, and consequently exception was taken to it by the right reverend Prelate. That matter is altered by the Amendment.

Amendment moved—

"In the first schedule, page 4, line 20, to leave out the words 'The managers of all public elementary schools,' and to insert the words 'A manager of a public elementary school provided by the local education authority'; and in line 21 to leave out from the word 'years' to the end of the paragraph, and to insert the words 'but may be re-appointed.'"—(*The Marquess of Londonderry.*)

LORD TWEEDMOUTH said it seemed to him that the Amendment would strike out all limit as to the period of appointment of managers of non-provided schools. The sub-section would read—

> "A manager of a public elementary school provided by the local education authority shall not be appointed for a longer period than three years, but may be re-appointed."

The result of that would be that, so far as provided schools were concerned, all the managers would have to be appointed every three years, whereas in the case of non-provided schools there would be no limit whatever, whether the managers were foundation managers or managers appointed by local authorities. He did not think that could be the intention of the noble Marquess. In certain cases, where the manager was appointed *ex officio*, it might be well for him not to come under the three years limit; but surely the other managers whether chosen by the local education authority or the owners of the school, ought to be appointed for three years, it being perfectly open for the people who appointed them to re-appoint them at the end of their term.

THE MARQUESS OF LONDONDERRY failed to see where the injustice came in.

EARL SPENCER hoped the noble Marquess would not press his Amendment, which would have a very serious effect. Under it they would have in non-provided schools managers appointed for all time, and no change would be possible. He thought it desirable that there should be a change, and he trusted that the President of the Board of Education would not insist upon his Amendment.

THE EARL OF CAMPERDOWN hoped the noble Marquess would take the matter into consideration. What object could anyone have in wishing that a manager should be appointed for an unlimited time? He did not think that was in the interests either of non-provided school managers or of provided school managers. Surely there was nothing at all harsh in providing that every manager should be elected once in three years. It was a simple rule and a good one.

Lord Tweedmouth.

THE LORD PRESIDENT OF THE COUNCIL (The Duke of DEVONSHIRE): I understand there is no limit to the length of time for which voluntary school managers may be appointed in the country generally, and there seems to be no reason why a different rule should apply to London from that which applies to the rest of the country.

THE LORD BISHOP OF HEREFORD said he had understood that the noble Marquess's intention was to accept an Amendment which he had moved in order to make the schedule read grammatically, but in framing the Amendment now before the House a new condition had been introduced. He could not but feel that even the ungrammatical language would be preferable to the new clause. What the sub-section was intended to provide was, he imagined, this, that the managers of all public elementary schools should be appointed for a period not exceeding three years. That was the original intention, but it was illogically expressed.

*THE LORD ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY confessed to having a great deal of sympathy with the arguments adduced as to the undesirability of permanent appointments of managers being made, either in provided or non-provided schools. But his difficulty arose from what was stated by the noble Duke with great force, that it was inconvenient to make a different arrangement in London from that which was applicable to the country, and he hoped rather that the Board of Education would use its authority to discountenance schemes which did not provide for a triennial election of all managers except those sitting *ex officio*.

On Question, Amendment agreed to.

THE LORD BISHOP OF HEREFORD said that owing to the rapid transaction of business the other evening, he was precluded from moving an Amendment which stood in his name, and he now desired to bring it forward. It was a very modest Amendment, and its object was to give the local education authority power, by its by-laws dealing with school attendance, to require all children who left school before reaching the seventh standard, or such other standard as might be fixed by the by-laws, to attend continuation classes until they reached this standard, or, failing this, attained the age of sixteen years. The Amendment was of an urgent character, for it dealt with one of the greatest defects in our system of elementary education, and would check, to a large extent, the moral and intellectual waste that was now going on. As long ago as 1891 it was enacted in Germany that through the ordinance of a district council, or any wider communal body, attendance at a continuation school might be made obligatory for all male workers under the age of eighteen. Their Lordships would see how much more drastic this was than the proposal in his Amendment. The State law of Saxony, passed in 1873, enacted that all boys leaving the elementary schools should be required to attend a continuation school for three years, unless their further instruction was otherwise provided for by some approved means. As to the good results of these provisions there could be no question.

The Director of the Leipzic Continuation School had stated—

> "Naturally boys of fourteen cannot be trusted by their own unaided intelligence to see the advantage or necessity of attending school. Therefore it is a good thing to have the rule. The great majority of the boys, if left alone, would never open a book or write a composition, or work a single sum after leaving school."

But the most striking part of this teacher's testimony was as to the moral results of this system of continuation schools. He would like to see the principle of this Amendment applied to the whole country. A large number of persons interested in education, and many of the leading employers, were very anxious that attendance at this kind of continuation class should be made obligatory.

Amendment moved—

> "In the first schedule, page, 4, after paragraph 11, to insert the following new paragraphs—
>
> '(a) The local education authority may, by its by-laws dealing with school attendance, require all children who leave school before reaching the seventh standard, or such other standard as may be fixed by the by-laws, to attend continuation classes until they reach this standard or, failing this, attain the age of sixteen years; and the minimum number of attendances required in each year shall be ninety of one hour each, it being provided that duly registered attendance at a Sunday school or Bible class shall, if the parents so desire, be reckoned for not more than thirty of the ninety attendances required.
>
> '(b) Parents and employers contravening such by-law shall be liable to a fine not exceeding forty shillings for each offence.'"—(*The Lord Bishop of Hereford.*)

THE LORD ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY said he was entirely in favour of the principle underlying the Amendment; but he believed that his right rev. brother would retard rather than promote the attainment of his object by putting this proposal in the schedule of a Bill dealing only with London education. He hoped that on a suitable opportunity legislation would be proposed giving effect to some proposal of this character and applying the principle to the country as a whole.

THE LORD ARCHBISHOP OF YORK said the right rev. Prelate had struck the weakest point in our system of elementary education. It was essential that some such provision as this should be adopted if they were to have anything like true education for the children in elementary schools. When he was a parish clergyman he frequently found that in the course of two or three years lads who had left school at the ordinary period absolutely lost the power of reading intelligently.

THE MARQUESS OF LONDONDERRY: The object of this Amendment is to enable the local education authority to make attendance at continuation schools compulsory beyond the age at which attendance at school is now compulsory. Such a provision is a wide-reaching and very important extension of the present law as to compulsory education. It was proposed last year as an Amendment to the general Act, and was resisted on the ground that any extension of the limits of compulsory education should be the subject of separate legislation, and should not be dealt with in a Bill which was dealing primarily with education machinery. These arguments are much stronger against the insertion of such a clause in the present Bill than they were against the insertion of the clause in last year's Act. There is no special reason from this point of view to differentiate London from the rest of the country, and such a provision should certainly not be made in a Bill which deals only with London. As a matter of fact, it is clearly not within the title of the Bill, which is only a Bill to extend last year's Act to London. I am bound, therefore, to ask the right rev. Prelate not to press his Amendment.

*THE EARL OF CREWE said he sympathised with the object which the right rev. Prelate had in view, but he agreed that it was not a subject that could be dealt with in this Bill.

Amendment, by leave of the House, withdrawn.

Bill to be read 3^a to-morrow; and to be printed as amended. (No. 189.)

BILLS OF EXCHANGE ACT, 1882, AMENDMENT BILL [H.L.],

Read 3^a (according to order), and passed, and sent to the Commons.

POST OFFICE MAINS.

LORD KINNAIRD asked his Majesty's Government whether in view of the danger and inconvenience to the public, stated to have been occasioned by the laying of Post Office mains under the public streets, without due regard to existing pipes and mains, the Postmaster-General would, before commencing work in any street, cause notice to be served upon the owners of existing pipes and mains of the intention of the Post Office to lay mains therein, and would conform with such reasonable requirements as might from time to time be made by the owners of such pipes and mains for the purpose of protecting them from injury; and whether the Postmaster-General would accept responsibility for the damage he might cause, in the same manner as companies having Parliamentary powers to open up thoroughfares.

LORD BALFOUR OF BURLEIGH: My Lords, I have been asked by my right hon. colleague, the Postmaster-General, to reply to this Question. It is perfectly true that electric light companies have to give notice to various bodies before they open the streets, and I think it only right that private corporations of that kind should be under somewhat stricter obligations than the Postmaster-General. At the same time, the Postmaster-General is under pretty definite statutory restrictions. If I understood the noble Lord rightly, there is some special case of damage which has been brought to his notice. No specific instance is given in the Question, and, therefore, I am not prepared with any answer to the case brought forward; but in a private letter asking me to answer this Question the Postmaster-General distinctly requests me to add that if the noble Lord, or others acting with him, have any specific case of damage and will bring it under the notice of my right hon. colleague he will give it his immediate attention. With regard to the remainder of the Question, I have to say that the procedure incumbent upon the Postmaster-General when he wants to lay underground telegraphs is regulated by a statute. There are three distinct requirements. In the first place, he is obliged to get the consent of the local authority, and he has to come to an agreement with them as to the method of carrying out the work. He has further, when it is resolved to open a public road or street, to give notice, so that the local authorities may have an opportunity of supervising the work. Then he has to give notice to any water or gas company of any alteration which is intended in their pipes. The Post Office engineers are instructed by printed regulations to comply with all the reasonable requirements made by other owners of pipes and mains. This, however, is not a statutory obligation; it is an instruction voluntarily given by the Postmaster-General. I suggest to the noble Lord and to the House that it is not desirable that further obligations or restrictions, such as are suggested in the noble Lord's Question, should be placed upon the Post Office in carrying out works which are for the public service. The fact is, many of the bodies who have pipes and mains under the public roads have no statutory right to be there at all. Of course, no one desires to do any damage to them wilfully, but in law many of them are there simply as trespassers. They are obviously in a very different position from owners, who have a statutory right to have their property under the public streets. There is only one other question to which I think I need refer, and that is the position in respect to damage. I would refer the noble Lord to Sections 7 and 42 of the Telegraph Act, 1863, which regulates the matter; but he will perhaps, excuse me from entering into any discussion upon it just now for this reason—that there is a case under these sections against the Postmaster-General shortly to come into Court, and I think it would obviously be unsatisfactory for the Government to discuss the matter in either House of Parliament at the moment. I have to repeat the promise given, that if any specific case of hardship is brought to the notice of the Postmaster-General full consideration will be given to it.

LORD KINNAIRD: I beg to thank the noble Lord for his answer, which is very satisfactory.

A WEDNESDAY SITTING.

THE DUKE OF DEVONSHIRE: My Lords, in moving the adjournment of the House, I regret to say I shall have to ask the House to sit at the usual hour tomorrow, in order to receive the Patent Office Extension Bill. That measure will involve the acquisition by compulsory powers, of sites, and under the Standing Orders it is necessary to give a week's notice within which petitions can be presented against it. I understand that it is intended also to take the Report stage of the Licensing (Scotland) Bill, and the Third Reading of the London Education Bill will also be put down. Of course if there is any objection with regard to the latter on the score of shortness of notice that Bill will not be proceeded with tomorrow. But I might say that the time of the House for the remainder of the session will be fully occupied, and perhaps it would be better to take the Bill tomorrow than at a late hour on Thursday or Friday night-

*THE EARL OF CREWE, in the absence of the Leader of the Opposition, said he was not aware of the extent to which the discussion on the Education Bill would go, but he was obliged to the noble Duke for stating that if necessary the Bill should be put down for a later day.

NAVAL WORKS BILL.

Brought from the Commons. Read 1^a; to be printed and to be read 2^a on Friday next. (*The Earl of Selbourne.* (No. 190.)

POOR LAW (DISSOLUTION OF SCHOOL DISTRICTS AND ADJUSTMENTS) BILL.

Brought from the Commons. Read 1^a; to be printed; and to be read 2^a tomorrow. (*The Lord Kenyon.*) (No. 191.)

House adjourned at ten minutes past Six o'clock till tomorrow, half-past Four o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Tuesday, 4th August, 1903.

The House met at Two of the Clock.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Baker Street and Waterloo Railway (Extension of Time) Bill; Beckenham Urban District Council Bill; London County Council (Money) Bill; London County Council (Tramways and Improvements) Bill; Mullingar, Kells, and Drogheda Railway Bill; Lords' Amendments considered, and agreed to.

Somerset and District Electric Power Bill [Lords] (Prince of Wales's Consent, as Duke of Cornwall, signified). Read the third time, and passed, with Amendments.

Bradford Corporation Bill [Lords]; Bury and District Joint Water Board Bill [Lords]. As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

North Western Electricity and Power-Gas Bill [Lords]. As amended, considered; Amendments made; Bill to be read the third time.

Salford Corporation Bill [Lords]. As amended, considered; to be read the third time.

Shropshire and Worcestershire Electric Power Bill [Lords]. As amended, considered; An Amendment made; Bill to be read the third time.

Airdie and Coatbridge Tramways Order Confirmation Bill; Lerwick Harbour Improvements Act (1877) Amendment Order Confirmation Bill. Considered; to be read the third time to-morrow.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have agreed to—Great Central Railway Bill; Gateshead Corporation Bill; South Yorkshire Joint Railways Bill; North Eastern Railway Bill; Sheffield Corporation Bill; Cork Harbour Bill, with Amendments.

Amendment to Bournemouth Gas and Water Bill [Lords].

That they have agreed to,

Amendments to Tramways Orders Confirmation (No. 1) Bill [Lords]; Tramways Orders Confirmation (No. 2) Bill [Lords]; Chard Corporation Gas and Electricity Bill [Lords]; Rochester Corporation Tramways and Improvements Bill [Lords]; Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire Tramways Bill [Lords]; West Bromwich Corporation Bill [Lords]; Hove, Worthing, and District Tramways Bill [Lords]; South Eastern and London, Chatham, and Dover Railways Bill [Lords]; Scottish Ontario and Manitoba Land Company Bill [Lords], without Amendment.

PETITIONS.

LICENCES RENEWAL AND TRANSFER BILL AND LICENSING LAW (COMPENSATION FOR NON-RENEWAL) BILL.

Petition from Flimby, against; to lie upon the Table.

MOTOR-CARS (SPEED).

Petition from Perth, for legislation; to lie upon the Table.

VACCINATION ACTS 1867 TO 1898.

Petition from Eastbourne, for repeal; to lie upon the Table.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

MERCHANT SHIPPING ACT, 1894 (VESSELS DETAINED).

Copy presented, of Return of all ships ordered by the Board of Trade, or its officers, during the period from the 1st July, 1902 to 30th June 1903, to be provisionally detained as unsafe, together with summaries, etc. (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper [C. 1233]) [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

SHIPPING CASUALITIES (1901–2).

Copy presented, of Abstract of the Returns of shipping casualties which occurred on or near the coasts or in rivers and harbours of the United Kingdom from the 1st July, 1901 to 30th June, 1902, and of the Returns of shipping casualties to British vessels elsewhere than on the coasts of the United Kingdom, and to foreign vessels on or near the coasts, or in rivers and harbours, of British possessions abroad, etc., with Charts and Appendices [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

COAL TABLES, 1902.

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered, 30th July; *Mr. Gerald Balfour*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 312.]

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT, 1888.

Copies presented, of Orders made by the various County and County Borough Councils in England and Wales under Sections 57 and 59 of the Act, as confirmed by the Local Government Board [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

INLAND REVENUE.

Copy presented, of Forty-Sixth Report of the Commissioners, for the year ended 31st March, 1903 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

CIVIL SERVANTS (RETIREMENT AT THE AGE OF SIXTY-FIVE).

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 3rd August; *Mr. Elliot*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 313.]

EAST INDIA (RAILWAYS).

Copy presented, of Administration Report on the Railways in India for the year 1902, by A. Brereton, Esquire, Secretary to the Government of India Public Works Department, Railways [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

TRADE REPORTS (ANNUAL SERIES).

Copies presented, of Diplomatic and Consular Reports, Annual Series, Nos. 3049 to 3051 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

NAVY (EXCEPTIONS TO KING'S REGULATIONS).

Copy presented, of list of exceptions to the King's Regulations as to pay, non-effective pay, and allowances during the year 1902–3 [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

ADJOURNMENT MOTIONS UNDER STANDING ORDER No. 10.

Return ordered, "of Motions for Adjournment under Standing Order No. 10, showing the date of such Motion, the name of the Member proposing, the definite matter of urgent public importance, and the result of any Division taken thereon during session 1903 (in the same form as, and in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 391, of session 1902)."—(*Mr. Caldwell.*)

CLOSURE OF DEBATE (STANDING ORDER No. 26).

Return ordered, "respecting application of Standing Order No. 26 (closure of debate) during session 1903, under the following heads:—

1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.
Date when Closure moved.	By whom moved.	Question before House or Committee when moved.	Whether in House or Committee.	Whether assent given to Motion or withheld by Speaker or Chairman.	Assent withheld because, in the opinion of the Chair, a decision would shortly be arrived at without that Motion.	Result of Motion, and, if a Division, Numbers for and against.

(in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 392, of session 1902)." — (*Mr. Caldwell.*)

DIVISIONS OF THE HOUSE.

Return ordered, "of the number of Divisions of the House in session 1903; stating the subject of the Division, and the number of Members in the majority and minority, Tellers included; also, the aggregate number in the House on each Division; distinguishing the Divisions of public business from private; and also the number of Divisions before and after midnight (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 0.238, session 1902)."—(*Mr Caldwell.*)

PUBLIC BILLS.

Return ordered, "of the number of Public Bills, distinguishing Government from other Bills, introduced into this House, or brought from the House of Lords, during session 1903; showing the number which received the Royal Assent; the number which were passed by this House but not by the House of Lords; the number passed by the House of Lords but not by this House; and distinguishing the stages at which such Bills as did not receive the Royal Assent were dropped or postponed and rejected in either House of Parliament (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 0.237, of session 1902)."—(*Mr. Caldwell.*)

PUBLIC PETITIONS.

Return ordered, "of the number of public Petitions presented and printed in session 1903; with the total number of signatures in that year (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 0.236, of session 1902)."—(*Mr. Caldwell.*)

SELECT COMMITTEES.

Return ordered, "of the number of Select Committees appointed in session 1903, including the Standing Committees and the Court of Referees; the subjects of inquiry; the names of the Members appointed to serve on each, and of the Chairman of each; the number of days each Committee met, and the number of days each Member attended; the total expense of the attendance of witnesses at each Select Committee, and the name of the Member who moved for such Select Committee; also, the total number of Members who served on Select Committees (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 0.234, of session 1902)."—(*Mr. Caldwell.*)

SITTINGS OF THE HOUSE.

Return ordered, "of the number of days on which the House sat in session 1903, stating for each day the date of the month and day of the week, the hour of the meeting, and the hour of adjournment; and the total number of hours occupied in the sittings of the House, and the average time; and showing the number of hours on which the House sat each day, and the number of hours after midnight; and the number of entries in each day's Votes and Proceedings (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 0.235, of session 1902)."—(*Mr. Caldwell.*)

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (DAYS OCCUPIED BY GOVERNMENT AND BY PRIVATE MEMBERS).

Return ordered, "showing, with reference to session 1903, (1) the number of sittings at which, in accordance with the Standing Orders, Government Business had precedence; (2) the number of evening sittings on Tuesdays and Wednesdays, and the number of sittings on Fridays at which private Members had precedence under the Standing Orders; (3) the number of sittings at which Government Business had precedence under a special Order of the House; (4) the number of Saturday sittings; (5) the total number of sittings at which Government Business had precedence; (6) the total number of days on which the House sat; (7) the total number of Motions for Adjournment of the House on a matter of urgent public importance; and (8) the number of days on which Business of Supply was considered (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 393, of session 1902.)"—(*Mr. Caldwell.*)

PRIVATE BILLS AND PRIVATE BUSINESS.

Return ordered, "of the number of Private Bills, Hybrid Bills, and Bills for confirming Provisional Orders introduced into the House of Commons and brought from the House of Lords, and of Acts passed in session 1903, classed according to the following subjects: Railways, tramways, tramroads, subways, canals and navigation, roads and bridges, water, waterworks, gas, gas and water, lighting and improvement, police and sanitary regulations, corporations, &c. (not relating to police and sanitary regulations or to lighting and improvement schemes); ports, piers, harbours, and docks; churches, chapels, and burying grounds; markets and fairs; gaols and other county buildings; inclosure and drainage; estate; divorce; naturalisation; hospitals and miscellaneous."

"Of all the Private Bills, Hybrid Bills, and Bills for confirming Provisional Orders which in session 1903 have been reported on by Committees on Opposed Private Bills or by Committees nominated partly by the House and partly by the Committee of Selection, together with the names of the selected Members who served on each Committee; the first and also the last day of the sitting of each Committee; the number of days on which each Committee sat; the number of days on which each selected Member has served; the number of days occupied by each Bill in Committee; the Bills the Preambles of which were reported to have been proved; the Bills the Preambles of which were reported to have been not proved; and, in the case of Bills for confirming Provisional Orders, whether the Provisional Orders ought or ought not to be confirmed."

"Of all Private Bills and Bills for confirming Provisional Orders which, in session 1903, have been referred by the Committee of Selection, or by the General Committee on Railway and Canal Bills, to the Chairman of the Committee of Ways and Means, together with the names of the Members who served on each Committee; the number of days on which each Committee sat; and the number of days on which each Member attended."

"And, of the number of Private Bills, Hybrid Bills, and Bills for confirming Provisional Orders withdrawn or not proceeded with by the parties, those Bills being specified which have been referred to Committees and dropped during the sittings of the Committee (in continuation of Parliamentary Paper, No. 0.233, of session 1902)."—(*Mr. Caldwell.*)

TECHNICAL EDUCATION (APPLICATION OF FUNDS BY LOCAL AUTHORITIES).

Return ordered "showing the extent to which, and the manner in which, local authorities in England and Wales have applied funds to the purposes of technical education (including science, art, technical, and manual instruction) during the year 1902–1903, under the following Acts: Local Taxation (Customs and Excise) Act, 1890; Technical Instruction Acts, 1889 and 1891; Welsh Intermediate Education Act, 1889; and Public Libraries and Museums Acts."—(*Sir William Anson.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Orphan and Deserted Children.

MR. HARWOOD (Bolton): To ask the President of the Local Government Board if he can state how many are actually orphans, or deserted by their parents, out of the 34,506 children relieved without their parents.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) The information at my disposal does not enable me to give these particulars.

Able-bodied Men in Metropolitan Workhouses.

MR. TALBOT (Oxford University): To ask the President of the Local Government Board what is the number of able-bodied men now maintained in the metropolitan workhouses; whether his attention has been called to the experiment made by the guardians of St. George's Union for testing such persons on a farm colony at Hadleigh, in Essex; and, if so, can he state the result of such experiment, and say whether he is prepared to recommend it to other boards of guardians in London.

(*Answered by Mr. Walter Long.*) In February last I approved an agreement between the guardians of the St. George's Union and the Salvation Army for the reception and maintenance at the Hadleigh Farm Colony of a certain number of men chargeable to the union. I required that a full report should be made to me at the end of the first six months as to the working of the experiment, and this report will be due in about a month's time. Hence I cannot at present say whether I should feel able to recommend the adoption of a similar course in other cases. The number of male inmates of workhouses in London who are returned as able-bodied in health is 1,581. I understand, however, that probably not more than one-tenth of this number would be certified by the union medical officers as being fit to be sent to a farm colony like that at Hadleigh.

Return of Duties on Imports into British Colonies.

MR. ALFRED DAVIES (Carmarthen Boroughs): To ask the Secretary to the Board of Trade if he can state when the Return of Duties on Imports into the British Colonies, ordered by the House, on 21st July, to be printed, will be issued.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) This will, I hope, be issued during the present week.

Petitions of Dockyard Employees.

MR. REGINALD LUCAS (Portsmouth): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether he can hold out hopes that some announcement concerning the petitions of dockyard employees will be made before the Appropriation Bill is introduced.

(*Answered by Mr. Elliot.*) It would be convenient if the hon. Member will address this Question to the Admiralty.

Postal Deliveries at Holyhead.

MR. ELLIS GRIFFITH (Anglesey): To ask the Postmaster General whether his attention has been called to the inconvenience experienced by tradesmen occupying lock-up shops, and other residents at Holyhead, owing to the first delivery of letters each day taking place before the shops are open, and in the event of any letter being too bulky to pass through the letter-box, their being returned to the post office to await the next delivery; whether he is aware that the second delivery does not take place until about 3 p.m., and that this delay causes hardship; and if so, whether he will be prepared to relax the regulations to the extent of either allowing the letters of persons well known to the officials to be handed to them over the counter should they call for them at the post office, or of ordering that such letters be delivered with the first parcels delivery; or if not, whether he will arrange for an additional delivery of letters to take place not later than 10 a.m. each day.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) There was a misunderstanding at the Holyhead office. The rule, as altered by me two or three months ago, admits of such letters as the hon. Member refers to being obtained at the post office without charge, provided no delivery by postman is about to take place. In regard to the second part of the Question, the number of letters at Holyhead is not sufficient to justify the establishment of a fourth delivery.

Baghdad Railway and German Capital.

MR. REGINALD LUCAS: To ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he can give any official information to the effect that the Baghdad railway line is to be constructed exclusively with German capital.

(*Answered by Lord Cranborne.*) We have no official information to this effect, and the matter seems to be still under discussion.

Surrender to the Chinese Authorities of the Prisoners in the Supao Sedition Case.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): To ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, in view of the fact that Shen Chien, a Chinese journalist and member of the Chinese reform party, was recently beaten to death at Peking by order of the Empress Dowager, will the British representative at Shanghai be instructed to decline to surrender to the Chinese authorities the prisoners in the Supao sedition case.

(*Answered by Lord Cranborne.*) The demand of the Viceroy of Nanking for the surrender of two of the prisoners has been referred to the foreign representatives at Peking, and is now under consideration. I cannot at present give any information as to the decision that will be taken.

Reduction of Teachers' Salaries by the New Education Authorities.

MR. MANSFIELD (Lincolnshire, Spalding): To ask the Secretary to the Board of Education whether he is aware that the salary of the head master of the Hickman Street Wesleyan School, Gainsborough, has been reduced from £225 (the amount given by the managers previous to the school being taken over by the Lindsey Education Committee) to £200; and, if so, will he say whether, in cases where the salary of teachers is reduced by the education authority, the managers of the school concerned, or the teachers, can appeal to the Board of Education.

(*Answered by Sir William Anson.*) The Board have no official knowledge on this subject. It appears from the records in the office that the teacher has never been in the receipt of a fixed salary of £225. His salary has fluctuated during the last twelve years between £204 and £222. The Board of Education have always discouraged fluctuating salaries. The local authority has, under Section 7 of the Education Act, the control of all expenditure required for the purpose of maintaining and keeping efficient the public elementary schools within its area. The matter of teachers' salaries is not one in which the Board of Education would intervene unless it could be shown that a reduction of salaries amounted to a failure by the local education authority in its duty to maintain and keep efficient a public elementary school.

South African Garrison—India's Charge—Protest by the Viceroy.

MR. WEIR: To ask the Secretary of State for India whether he has received a telegram from the Viceroy of India strongly protesting against the proposal to charge the revenues of India with part of the cost of the increased garrison in South Africa; and will he state what decision has been arrived at.

(*Answered by Secretary Lord George Hamilton.*) A telegram has been received from the Government of India on this subject expressing dissent from the suggestion which had been sent out for their consideration, and informing me that a despatch is on its way home.

Promotion of Second Division Clerks holding Staff Posts.

COLONEL WYNDHAM-QUIN (Glamorganshire, S.): To ask the Secretary to the Treasury whether the Treasury will be prepared to allow the holder of a staff post of the Second Division, on being promoted to the higher division, to carry with him the salary of the staff post, provided that such salary should in no case be higher than that of a clerk who had entered the First Division and had been an equal time in the public service.

(*Answered by Mr. Elliot.*) The rule is that a staff officer (other than the holder of a temporary staff post) who is promoted to the First Division shall enter that division either at the minimum of the scale of his new post, or, if he prefers, at the salary to which he would have risen if he had remained in the Second Division instead of being appointed to a staff post; provided that in no case shall his commencing salary in the First Division exceed the amount to which he would have risen by length of service if his original appointment had been to that division at the age of twenty-four. The rule was very carefully considered, and I am unable to recommend its alteration in the sense suggested. I do not think that it is unfair to the officers concerned.

Contracts for the Supply of Jam and Tinned Rations for the Navy.

MR. KEIR HARDIE (Merthyr Tydvil): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he will state what contracts have been placed for the supplies of jam and other preserved rations for the Navy, the names of the firms with whom they have been placed, and the quantity to be supplied by each; and whether the tins used are soldered or what are known in the trade as spun tins.

(*Answered by Mr. Arnold-Forster.*) Both soldered and spun tins are used by the Admiralty contractors. As regards the rest of the Question, I must beg to refer the honourable Member to my reply to a similar Question put by him on the 3rd November last.†

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

Imperial Yeomanry.

MR. MANSFIELD (Lincolnshire, Spalding): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War is he aware that a number of the men belonging to the 1901 batch of Imperial Yeomanry complained at Aldershot that they received only seven days' furlough money instead of one month, and that the first batches disbanded were paid one month; and, if so, will he state the reason for this difference of treatment.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR WAR (Mr. BRODRICK, Surrey, Guildford): The first levy of Imperial Yeomanry were paid the ordinary cavalry rate of pay only, and therefore received the gratuity of thirty days' pay. The later levies were paid at the rate of 5s. a day, and were therefore ineligible for the gratuity. Their discharges were post-dated seven days in order to give time for the completion of their discharge.

MR. MANSFIELD: But is it not the fact that some of the 1901 men had the month's furlough, although they received 5s. a day?

MR. BRODRICK: No, Sir; the men who had 5s. a day were on an entirely different footing.

Naval Fortresses.

SIR JOHN COLOMB (Great Yarmouth): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he can state how many of the 131,786 Militia and Volunteers appropriated to the service of naval fortresses at home are raised in, or belong to, localities within Army Corps districts in which naval fortresses are situate. I beg also to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he can state the total number of Militia and Volunteers raised in, or belonging to, Army Corps districts in which naval fortresses are situated; and how many of this total number are appropriated to field and fortress service respectively.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxiii., 1382.

MR. BRODRICK: It is not considered desirable to publish the detailed information affecting the national defences for which my hon. and gallant friend asks.

SIR JOHN COLOMB: Is the right hon. Gentleman aware of the fact that any one can calculate the figures from the War Office Vote?

MR. BRODRICK: That may be, but I would rather not be the channel for communicating them to the House.

Imperial Yeomanry at Naval Fortresses.

SIR JOHN COLOMB: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for War whether he can explain the reason for the provision of 2,526 Imperial Yeomanry for service at naval fortresses at home.

MR. BRODRICK: These Yeomanry are intended in case of war for reconnaissance purposes, and to guard against raids on isolated spots within the rayon of defence of the fortress.

SIR JOHN COLOMB: Then I hope the right hon. Gentleman will put this Vote on the Marine Fund.

British and Russian Navies.

MR. YERBURGH (Chester): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether, seeing that Russia has now commenced to build two first-class battleships in the Black Sea since the Admiralty framed their Naval Estimates for the current year, is it their intention, in accordance with the precedent of 1898, to introduce a supplementary shipbuilding programme.

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER, Belfast, W.): I think my hon. friend is under a misapprehension. No new fact has come to the notice of the Admiralty which would necessitate such a proceeding as that suggested. The fact that the building of these two ships was contemplated by Russia was known to, and taken into consideration by, the Admiralty when framing the programme submitted by them to Parliament. When the last Return was presented, no reference was made to these ships, because, as I have already explained, it has been the practice to include only such ships as have been actually sanctioned or begun. I can only repeat that should developments take place which have not been anticipated, or taken into account by the Admiralty, Parliament will be informed; but such an event has not yet occurred.

SIR FORTESCUE FLANNERY (Yorkshire, Shipley): Is the hon. Gentleman aware that during the last six years there have been laid down for England nineteen battleships, while France and Russia together have laid down twenty-two.

*MR. SPEAKER: Order, order! That raises a different question.

Naval Volunteers in the Channel Islands.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether any steps have been taken to consider the applicability of the principle of the Naval Forces Act, as regards the enrolment of naval volunteers, to Jersey and Guernsey, in respect of the defence of the Channel Islands in time of war; and, if State legislation is necessary, whether steps will be taken to obtain it from the States of Jersey and the States of Guernsey.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: I understand that the principle of the Naval Forces Act is applicable to the Channel Islands, although it is possible that on points of detail State legislation might be found necessary. The question will be fully gone into, but it is proposed to proceed first of all with the organisation of the divisions of naval volunteers in London and on the Clyde, before dealing with other districts.

Roman Catholic Chaplains on Training Ships.

MR. CAREW (Meath, S.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he is aware that on board the training ships "Chichester" and "Arethusa" Roman Catholic boys are not allowed to practise their religion, though in the case of the "Arethusa" there is a

Roman Catholic church within 200 yards of the landing place; and whether, seeing that these ships, though supported by voluntary contributions, are a free gift from the Admiralty, and are subsidised by that body by grants for boys passed from them into the Navy, and that boys are required to sign a paper countersigned by parent or guardian agreeing to conform whilst on these ships, the Admiralty will see that the conscientious convictions of children and parents are not interfered with.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: The Admiralty have no information whatever on this subject. The matter appears to be essentially one for the managers of the training ships, and I would suggest that the proper course for the hon. Member to adopt with regard to any question as to which dissatisfaction exists, is to approach the managers direct.

MAJOR JAMESON (Clare, W.): Cannot the hon. Gentleman himself see his way to making a suggestion to the managers on the subject.

MR. ARNOLD-FORSTER: It would be quite outside the province of the Admiralty.

MAJOR JAMESON: Do the Admiralty take no cognisance whatever of anything done on training ships?

[No answer was returned.]

Brussels Sugar Convention—British Terms of Ratification.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON (Dundee): I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he can state the actual terms of the conditions subject to which the British ratification of the Sugar Convention was deposited.

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS (Lord CRANBORNE, Rochester): The information is contained in No. 7 of the Treaty Series of Foreign Office Parliamentary Papers. The conditions, subject to which the British ratification was deposited, were that His Majesty's Government would not consent under any circumstances to be bound to penalise bounty-fed sugar imported into the United Kingdom from any of the self-governing British colonies. Also that they were not prepared to accept any reference of this question to the Permanent Commission to be established under Article VII., and that His Majesty's ratification of the Convention was deposited under the explicit declaration above mentioned.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: Was any other ratification subject to such a condition?

LORD CRANBORNE: I think not, but I would rather not pledge myself.

Workmen's Compensation Act.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE: I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his attention has been called to the result of the appeal heard in the King's Bench Division on the 10th July in the case of Owner *v.* Hooper, a case in which the Inspector of Factories had supported a summons charging the respondent with unlawfully making an illegal payment in respect of a charge levied since the passing of the Workmen's Compensation Act by means of a deduction on the wages paid, covering the insurance premiums for liability under the Compensation Act, and making a profit for the manufacturer of over 100 per cent. on the amount paid for insurance; and, if so, will he state whether legislation is necessary to deal with the point, and whether the Government will consider it in connection with any amendment of the Compensation Act.

*THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE HOME DEPARTMENT (Mr. AKERS DOUGLAS, Kent, St. Augustine's): Yes, Sir, the question raised in this case is certainly one which must be considered in connection with any amendment of the Workmen's Compensation Act.

Civil Pensions and Gratuities.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Treasury if he can state the total amount paid for pensions and superannuation allowances, including those charged on the Consolidated Fund, in the last financial year.

THE FINANCIAL SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Mr. ELLIOT, Durham): The total amount paid for civil pensions and retiring gratuities during 1902-3, including those charged on the Consolidated Fund but exclusive of naval or military retired pay, was £2,542,559. Of this the Admiralty absorbed £325,000, the War Office £191,100, and the Post Office £417,000. He would hand the hon. Member detailed particulars.

Birchet's Green National School, Berkshire.

MR. HARWOOD (Bolton): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Education whether, in view of the fact that the Board has issued an order for the election of foundation managers of the Birchet's Green National School, Berkshire, in which it is stipulated that the two representative managers are to declare themselves members of the Church of England, he will state what is the meaning attached by the Board to the expression member of the Church of England.

THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (Sir William ANSON, Oxford University): The Board do not inquire what is the precise meaning which a manager who is required by the order to be a member of the Church of England affixes to that expression. They are satisfied with his written assurance that he possesses the qualifications required by the order.

Extra Police in County Clare.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether anything can be done to relieve the Clare County Council from the payment of the sum of £441 for the cost of extra police up to March last, in view of the peaceable state of the county as evidenced by the charge of the Lord Chief Justice at the late Assizes.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. WYNDHAM, Dover): The additional police were withdrawn from Clare on the 1st April. The charge incurred for the extra force to that date is a statutory one, which cannot be remitted.

Greencastle Orange Demonstration.

MR. SLOAN (Belfast, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether his attention has been called to a public meeting, held in Greencastle on 29th July, protesting against the action of the police sergeant who cut the roping of an arch which was in the course of erection on 10th July; and, if so, will he state on whose authority this officer entered the premises of Mr. John Letters, and carried away a ladder, and order a sworn inquiry into the case.

MR. WYNDHAM: The reasons which influenced the police in preventing the erection of a Party arch on or before Sunday the 12th July, were explained in the answer to my hon. friend's previous Question of the 20th July.† The arch was erected, without interference, on Monday, the 13th July, when the Orange procession took place. No opposition was raised to the removal of the ladder, which was returned on the latter date. The action of the police does not call for the further inquiry suggested.

MR. JOSEPH DEVLIN (Kilkenny, N.) May I ask whether the meeting referred to in the Question was not held in the Presbyterian schoolroom. Has the attention of the National Board of Education been called to the action of the managers in lending the schoolroom for the purpose, and, if so, what is being done in the matter?

MR. WYNDHAM said the sole question was whether the arch should be erected on Sunday or Monday. The police considered it inadvisable to allow it to be erected on the former day. The holding of the public meeting in the National School has been brought under the notice of the Commissioners of National Education.

MR. SLOAN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he will explain why the Throne Flute Band which accompanied the Whitehouse Presbyterian

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxxv., 1138.

Church on an excursion 25th July last, on their return when proceeding to Greencastle Station, were stopped by Sergeant Gallagher and the police from the barracks, and why the sergeant ordered them to draw their batons; and whether he will have this officer removed to another district.

MR. WYNDHAM: The band did not proceed to its destination by the route arranged, but by way of Greencastle village, where danger of collision with a rival party was likely to arise. The police warned the bandsmen that they would not be allowed to play through Greencastle. They persisted, however, and the sergeant thereupon ordered his men to draw their batons. The bandsmen at this point undertook not to play if allowed to pass through the village. They were escorted through the village by the sergeant and his men, and all passed off quietly. The sergeant displayed much tact on the occasion and it is not proposed to remove him.

In reply to a further Question Mr. Wyndham said the regulations were applied equally to Catholic and Orange bands.

Belfast Disturbances.

MR. SLOAN: I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in view of the fact that only two policemen were on duty at the corner of Union Street and Donegal Street on 13th July, when a procession was attacked with the result that some persons were injured, he will cause inquiry to be made into the circumstances.

MR. WYNDHAM: As a matter of fact four policemen were stationed at this point on the occasion referred to, and sixty others were on duty within a radius of 200 yards. The Commissioner of Belfast, in whom the Government has the fullest confidence, was responsible for the allocation of the police, and it is not proposed to make further inquiry into the matter.

Cork Spring Assizes Murder Trial.

MR. O'SHAUGHNESSY (Limerick, W.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that a memorial was presented to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland in reference to the case of Andrew Moore, who was convicted at the Cork Spring Assizes, 1903, for the murder of the Rev. Mr. Bell and sentenced to be hanged, signed by the doctors who examined the body of the deceased and who gave evidence at the trial, and who stated in the memorial that it was impossible for them to say that the wounds on deceased were *ante mortem*; and, if so, whether he will lay the case before the Lord Lieutenant with a view to the release of Moore, whose sentence was commuted to penal servitude.

MR. WYNDHAM: I replied to a Question on this subject on the 29th June.† So far from the doctors having declared that they were unable to say whether the wound was *ante mortem* or not they, in their evidence, most distinctly and emphatically stated that it was their clear opinion that the wound must have been inflicted during the lifetime of the deceased. The Lord Lieutenant, who has had the case before him, has not seen his way to exercise the Royal prerogative in the manner suggested.

Evicted Farm in County Mayo.

DR. AMBROSE (Mayo, W): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he is aware that a man named Francis Sweeney was evicted seven years ago from his farm at Keelogues, County Mayo; that he died twenty-four hours after the eviction; that his daughter has resided in the vicinity of the farm since the eviction; that the farm is to be sold by public auction on 5th August; and, if so, whether he will see that the sale is postponed so that she may have an opportunity of purchasing the farm under the coming Irish Land Act.

MR. WYNDHAM: Sweeney died, I am informed, two months before his family was evicted. I have no power to take action as suggested at the conclusion of the Question.

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxxiv., 806.

Fiscal Inquiry—The Manchester Meeting.

MR. MANSFIELD: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury has his attention been drawn to the Resolution in connection with the proposed changes in the fiscal policy of this country, passed on Tuesday, 22nd July, at a joint meeting of the Cotton Employers' Association and the United Textile Workers' Association at Manchester; and, if so, will he state what is the Government's policy in regard to the free import of raw materials and food; and, if not, will the representatives of the associations concerned be invited to give evidence as to the effect which would result from the imposition of duties upon these articles before the inquiry into the fiscal policy.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E.): I have seen the report in question. I am informed, however, that the meeting was not a representative one, and that at a meeting of the association held subsequently some of the proceedings of the earlier meeting were not approved. On that point I have no further information to give to the House. As regards the other portion of the hon. Gentleman's Question, I have already dealt with questions of a similar kind, and I have really nothing to add to what I have already said.

MR. MANSFIELD: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury has the Government concluded any part of their inquiry into the fiscal policy of this country; if so, will he state which part; and whether it is proposed to publish such parts of the inquiry as they are from time to time completed.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I have nothing to say in answer to this Question.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN (Stirling Burghs) asked for information as to the course of business.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I hope the Sugar Convention Bill will pass through Committee this evening; if, unhappily, it is not finished, it will be put down for to-morrow.

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.): At what time then will it be taken?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: How can I tell? The Second Reading of the Revenue Bill and of the Housing of the Working Classes Bill, the Committee stage of the Railways (Electrical Power) Bill, and the Expiring Laws Continuance Bill will be put down for Wednesday. On Thursday Irish Supply will be taken, and after 12 o'clock I propose to take some Third Readings. On Friday I hope to take the Committee stage of the Motor-Car Bill. It will be seen from that statement that I see no prospect of taking to-morrow, as I had hoped, the two Departmental Ecclesiastical Bills on the Paper, and it is much to be regretted that there has been opposition to those Bills. According to the best information I can obtain, I do not think it possible to pass them in the present session; and I shall therefore introduce them at an earlier period of next session.

SIR H. CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN: Does the right hon. Gentleman propose to proceed with the Revenue Bill, which makes some twenty changes and clearly requires elaborate explanation?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I should have hoped that Bill, which is entirely a concession by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, would meet with universal approval; my right hon. friend has distributed an explanatory memorandum, but if the result of that explanation is to make hon. Gentlemen suspicious and to whet their appetite for discussion, it will be impossible for the Bill to pass. It is not my right hon. friend who will suffer by that.

COLONEL LOCKWOOD (Essex, Epping): When shall we be able to obtain copies of the agreement with the Cunard Steamship Company.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I hope this evening at 8 o'clock.

MR. LOUGH: And when will the discussion on it take place?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: It certainly cannot be taken this week.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): Cannot the right hon. Gentleman take the Third Reading of the Irish Development Grant Bill to-night? It is important to get it passed through this House as soon as possible.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: If there is no opposition to it I shall be glad to take it.

MR. WEIR (Ross and Cromarty): What does the right hon. Gentleman propose to do about the Congested Districts (Scotland) Bill?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I cannot say yet.

MR. O'MARA (Kilkenny, S.): And the Charitable Loan Societies (Ireland) Bill?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I cannot yet fix a day.

MR. CRIPPS (Lancashire, Stretford): Will the two Ecclesiastical Bills be taken up as Government Bills next session?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: Yes, Sir.

MR. HERBERT SAMUEL (Yorkshire, Cleveland): What about the Port of London Bill?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not see any chance of proceeding with that Bill in the course of the present week.

PISTOLS BILL.

Lords' Amendments to be considered forthwith; considered, and agreed to.

POLICE AND SANITARY COMMITTEE.

Special Report from the Select Committee, brought up and read.

Special Report to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 314.]

Minutes of Proceedings to be printed. [No. 314.]

NEW BILLS.

COUNTY AND BOROUGH COUNCILS AND METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCILS (QUALIFICATION OF WOMEN) BILL.

"To enable women to be elected and act as members of County and Borough Councils and Metropolitan Borough Councils," presented by Mr. Channing; supported by Mr. Bousfield, Mr. Crooks, Mr. Emmott, Mr. Ernest Gray, Mr. Lough, Mr. M'Kenna, and Mr. Yerburgh; to be read a second time upon Monday next, and to be printed. [Bill 311.]

ISLE OF MAN (CUSTOMS) BILL.

"To amend the Law with respect to Customs Duties in the Isle of Man," presented by Mr. Elliot; to be read a second time to-morrow, and to be printed. [Bill 307.]

MOTOR-CARS BILL. [LORDS.]

[SECOND READING.]

Order for Second Reading read.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD (Mr. WALTER LONG, Bristol, S.): In moving the Second Reading of this Bill, I wish to point out that the object of the Government has been misunderstood by some of those who have taken part in the controversy in the Press. It has been stated that their object is to give facilities to the users of motor-cars, and I have noticed with great regret an attempt in some quarters—limited in extent I am happy to say—to turn this into a class question, and to suggest that the use of motors is a privilege of the rich, and that the poor are the sufferers by the abuse of them. No doubt in regard to some of these motor-cars the suggestion is correct—they are very expensive, and obviously can only be owned by those who are rich. But I venture to deprecate this kind of description of the use of motor-cars for two reasons. If the simple question is asked "What is a motor-car?" it is not quite so easy to answer as hon. Gentlemen may think. It will be found that there is already a very large increase in the number of motor vehicles used by professional men of the smaller grade in country districts, such as medical men and those who do work for the local authorities. For these, motor-cars are available at, comparatively speaking, low prices, and I am told that the number of these is likely to continue to increase considerably. The other point of view from which I deprecate this kind of description of the use of motor-cars is this. I am assured by those who have to deal with motor-car cases before the magistrates, that the breaking of the law is by no means confined to those who are generally termed gentlefolk, and that in the neighbourhood of many of our large towns the law is far more frequently broken by people who hire motor-cars as a means of getting out into the country for a few hours. There is, therefore, no justification for trying to turn this into a class question, and I would venture respectfully and earnestly to express the hope that, whatever may be the attitude of the House of Commons on this very important question, we shall try and deal with it as practical men, without reference to any outside consideration such as I have referred to. It has been said that our object in promoting this Bill is to help the users of motor-cars. I emphatically deny that. The reason that we have asked Parliament to consider this Bill at so late a period of the session is one which every man who looks into the history of the question must easily recognise for himself. Twelve months ago the passage of such a Bill would have been easy; but latterly, in the last six months, there is no doubt that public feeling has been greatly excited by what I can only describe as the disgraceful abuse of their rights and privileges by many users of motor-cars. It is not only the security of life and limb that has to be dealt with, but also the extraordinary discomfort suffered by people who live on the roads which motors largely frequent. Many houses alongside the public roads have been rendered almost uninhabitable, not only by the dust, which is an intolerable nuisance in the summer months, but by other inconveniences which follow from the improper use of this means of conveyance. It is in order to deal with these difficulties that the Government have thought it their duty to introduce the Bill to Parliament, and I therefore ask the House to approach the question from the point of view that we are all agreed that the abuses of the motor-car must be abated, and that the only difference between us is what is the best method of securing that result.

No doubt in some parts of the country motor-cars can be driven at considerable speed without risk to any human being except the person who occupies the car. I have myself travelled in an ordinary horse conveyance many miles along such roads. On Salisbury Plain, for instance, one can see the road, which is not bounded with hedges or ditches, for many miles in front, and there is, I am sorry to say, such a limited traffic that one goes long distances without meeting a human being. On such roads a motor-car might be driven at a considerable speed without risk to anybody except the occupants of the car; but on the vast majority of the roads of this country motor-cars ought not to be driven at anything but a very moderate rate of speed. I will come in one moment to the chief feature of this Bill, around which so much controversy has raged, but I ask the House to believe that we propose this legislation to deal with what we recognise to be very great abuses, and we propose it in the present form because we believe it is the best method of dealing with those abuses. Obviously, it has been my business to consult the best authorities on the subject—those who have to carry the law into effect. The police, for instance, have had more personal experience than anybody else, and I may say at once that a very great majority of the chief constables in the country are of opinion that the proposals of the Bill, without a speed limit, are more likely to secure the effective control of motors than with a speed limit. A little fact is worth a good deal of reasoning, so I will give my own experience. I am not a motorist. The other day I was driving a horse conveyance along the road when a motor-car came suddenly round the corner and nearly drove into my horse, and was quickly away while I was attending to my horse, which, naturally, was very restless. Obviously it would not have been possible for me to say at what speed the car was travelling, and under the law as it stands I should have been powerless to act. It is much easier to establish the fact that a man is driving at a speed dangerous to the public than that he is driving beyond a speed limit. If there is a means of identifying a man who causes danger and inconvenience, that is a very much stronger power, and had this particular car been numbered I could quite easily have taken that number and summoned the owner of the car, who paid no attention either to me or to my difficulties. Had I been on Salisbury Plain at the time I should have been quite safe, for I should have been able to see the car coming a long way off and could have been prepared. The hopeless infractions of the present law show that you cannot prevent a man driving beyond a given speed if he chooses to do so. On ordinary country roads the hedges are too high and the turnings too narrow and sudden to afford the protection one has on Salisbury Plain. It is perfectly well known that in country places children often make the road their playground; and it is not reasonable to expect a mother, who has all her household work to do, to be continually watching her children lest they should toddle out into the road. Can she possibly be everlastingly on the watch?

We are told that there is very little risk, because motors are under greater control than carriages. No doubt a motor-car can be stopped or turned quicker than any other carriage possibly can be, but that depends on the brake being in perfect working order, and some of the worst accidents that have taken place have been due to the failure of the brake power or of the steering gear. It ought not, therefore, to be argued that risks ought to be run by the general public, because motors can be turned or stopped more easily than other carriages. On a great majority of the roads of this country the cars, if they are to be driven with safety to the public, should only travel at a very moderate rate of speed. What we propose is that reckless or negligent driving, or driving at a speed or in a manner dangerous to the public, having regard to the use of the highways and the use which may be expected to be made of them, shall be an offence under the Bill. It is contended in some quarters that that is only a recapitulation of the present law; but that is not the case. The present regulations prohibit a man from driving at any speed greater than is reasonable or proper, having regard to the traffic on the highway, or in such a way as to endanger the life or limb of any person; but the Bill strengthens that by making it an offence also to drive recklessly, negligently, or at a speed or in a manner dangerous to the public. I am assured by high authorities that that is a very considerable extension of the present law, and that it exposes the driver of a car to a risk of being summoned, to which he is not subjected at present. The Bill provides also, and this is absolutely new, for the registration of cars and the identification of drivers, and for the licensing of drivers, whether professional or amateur, and it makes it obligatory to stop in case of an accident. The Bill further gives power to local authorities to recommend to the central Department that there shall be a limit of speed in certain districts where it may be desirable, and provides for the setting up of danger boards by County Councils. The Bill is to be applicable to servants of the Crown. That is the best way to deal with those who are determined to break the law. It is said that by holding up a hand one cannot stop a motor-car. That is perfectly true; but we cannot stop it by enacting that it shall not go more than twelve, twenty or thirty miles an hour. It is said if we allow a driver to go at high speed we shall not be able to identify him. I do not think there need be any difficulty in regard to that portion of the question. We make most elaborate provision in the Bill that the distinguishing mark or number shall be capable of being read by day or night, and shall not be obscured by any cause whatever, whether it be temporary, such as dust, or whether it be deliberate on the part of the driver, by covering it with a rug or anything of that kind. We largely increase the fines, and in addition to that we make it possible to imprison the offender for a second offence. I cannot help thinking that these are better precautions than any you could adopt by enacting that twelve or twenty or thirty miles should be the maximum speed. Everybody knows that the maximum speed becomes the minimum speed. If you enact that they shall not go at more than twenty miles an hour, they go at twenty miles an hour. I have examined this question, having in view the checking of the disgraceful abuses which have been indulged in by many of the owners of these cars. I am convinced if you simply say there shall be a limitation of speed which shall be regarded by the public as security, that is no security. The police will be called upon to detect cases by laying traps which are useless, because they are laid in places which are less dangerous than those that have to be dealt with. I am told that motorists are becoming acquainted with these police traps, that they go very carefully past the danger spot, even now, and that they indulge themselves after they have passed it. We do not propose to say that thirty or fifteen or twelve miles an hour is illegal. Instead of that, we say that every man shall drive his car so that the road, when he is on it, shall be safe for the general public. We facilitate the identification of the offender, we provide extra penalties and imprisonment. I believe that is the surest way for dealing with what is unquestionably a serious abuse. On these grounds I ask the House to read the Bill a second time.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That the Bill be now read a second time."

*MR. SOARES (Devonshire, Barnstaple): We all admit that the right hon. Gentleman has devoted a great amount of care and attention to this very important subject, and if only the Bill had been as excellent as his speech, he would have much less difficulty in getting it through the House than he will have to-day. I notice that he still adheres to two great points. One is the total abolition of the speed limit, and the other is the placing of the County Councils under the heel of the Local Government Board. Therefore I intend to move the Motion for the rejection of the Bill standing in my name. In order to assuage the anxiety of my hon. friends who are anxious for the passage of this Bill, I may say at once that I expect to be badly beaten on the Division. In the first place, I shall have against me the thick-and-thin supporters of the Government, who always vote for a Government Bill whatever it may be, and I believe that if a Bill were brought in to increase the speed limit of his Satanic Majesty, these Gentlemen would record their votes in its favour if the Government Whips held in favour of it. I shall also have against me, I am told, no less than 123 motorist Members of this House. I do not mean to say for one moment that these hon. Gentlemen would allow their private pleasures to conflict with their public duties, but at the same time, I think perhaps they will be prepared to admit that naturally they are prejudiced in favour of a Bill to promote motoring. Then, I regret to say, I have heard—I do not know whether it is true or not—that I am also to have the Irish Party in favour of the Bill. They tell me that they enjoyed the motor races in Ireland so much that the glories of Punchestown will soon be a thing of the past. [AN IRISH MEMBER: No.] I am glad to hear that word of denial, because it must be remembered that Ireland is *par excellence* the country from which we have always obtained good hunters, and I think it will be a bad time for many of us when they send over a young motor cycle instead of a promising "lepper." This is a Bill dealing with an amusement which is indulged in principally by wealthy people. I do not know whether one ought to call it a Sports Bill or not. The word "sport" is difficult to define. But if a certain amount of killing or maiming of living creatures is necessarily incidental to a sport, then I think that motorists are justified in dignifying their amusement by that name. In approaching the consideration of a question of this kind it seems to me that we should clearly define what are the respective rights of the public to use the road, and what are the rights of motorists. I may say that there was a very good article on this matter in last month's *Nineteenth Century.* To my mind it is perfectly clear that there is a very great and inherent difference between the rights of the two parties, because the public has the use of the road by common law, whereas the motorists have only the right by statute. The public have a birthright to use the road, and you can only have legislation to affect their interest where it is clearly and absolutely proved that such legislation is in the interest of the public. The public have a right to come and say—"These roads are ours, and we have a right to use them, and you must not pass any legislation which conflicts with our interests." There can be no doubt that motorists are attempting to limit the right of the public with regard to the roads, and, as a matter of fact, motorists are in the position—I think it is an accurate definition—of statutory trespassers on the road. They have no inherent rights whatever; they have only such rights as have been conferred on them by statute. They come to this House as beggars asking for privileges to be conferred on them, and I think it is only right to remind them of the old adage that "beggars must not be choosers." No one can doubt that the roads were never made for motor-cars. Those who designed them and laid them out never thought of motor-cars. Most of the country roads, other than the old Roman roads, were originally bridle-paths, and they twist and turn in an absolutely incomprehensible manner. We know that the reason of the twisting and turning is that they had to go down to places where rivers could be forded, or to avoid a clump of trees or for some other similar reason. But does anyone think this would have been the case if it had been foreseen that it was intended to use them as railway lines? Certainly not; and therefore I say that we ought to pause before we give motorists the rights they are asking under this Bill.

What is the present state of the law with regard to this motor question? I must, I am sorry to say, go back to 1861, but only for one purpose—namely, to quote one clause in the Act passed in that year. That is a clause which gives power to the Home Secretary to prohibit any description of locomotive dangerous or inconvenient to the public. I want the House to notice the word inconvenient, because we hear nothing whatever now of the question of inconvenience to the public, yet by common law the public have not only a right to be protected in life and limb, but also a right to be protected against inconvenience. There is not a single word to that effect in this Bill, and therefore it must be admitted that the public are being asked to surrender a very important public right. I pass over the Acts of 1865 and 1878, and come to the Locomotives and Highways Act of 1896. That, of course, is the Magna Charta of motorists. That is the Act under which they live and move and have their being. It exempted from the provisions of previous Acts all those machines which are called light locomotives, under three tons, and so constructed as to prevent the emission of smoke or visible vapour. The Act also made provision with regard to a speed limit. It provided that the speed should not exceed fourteen miles an hour, and it gave the Local Government Board power to make regulations from time to time with regard to the speed limit and other matters. In pursuance of that power the President of the Board has made regulations, and he in his wisdom saw fit to limit the speed from fourteen to twelve miles. That is the speed limit at present, and that is how the law stands. We are asked to alter the whole of these provisions at this period of the session. I think the very strongest protest ought to be made against an important Bill of this kind being introduced at this period of the session. It is a Bill of the gravest importance. It affects the safety, welfare and comfort of hundreds of thousands, I might say millions, of His Majesty's subjects, and yet here we are asked to pass the Bill at the fag end of the Parliamentary session, and only to devote two or three days of Parliamentary time to it. What is the object of it? The object is simply and entirely that the speed limit restrictions may be withdrawn, and that motorists may have a good time during the coming year. The Act of 1896 was introduced into this House on 18th June, and it received the Royal Assent on 14th August, and yet the House complained that it was introduced without a sufficient amount of time being allowed for the House to discuss it. We are asked to consider this Bill now, and to put it through Committee in less than ten days of Parliamentary time. I do think we ought to make the very strongest and most emphatic protest in our power with regard to this matter. What is the reason why we are asked to pass this Bill at this period? It is because motorists refuse to obey the law as it stands at present. Those gentlemen laugh at your fines and your legislation. They laugh at a £5 fine. Many of them spend more than £5 on a dinner, and they do not care two straws for penalties of that kind. It is because of their attitude that we are asked to legislate now in the autumn. There is only one point on which we have to congratulate the Government, and that is that they have become absolute converts to the doctrine of passive resistance. What is the difference between passive resistance offered by Nonconformists to the education rate and that offered by a wealthy motor-car owner to the law? But note the distinction the Government makes between the rich motorist and the poor Nonconformist. It is quite true that the motorist is actuated by his own pleasure, whereas the passive resister is actuated by conscience.

MR. WALTER LONG: Does the hon. Member propose that we should treat the passive resister in regard to education in the same way as we treat the motorists in regard to locomotion—by sending him to prison.

*MR. SOARES: If the right hon. Gentleman would at once bring in a Bill which would meet the approval of all the passive education resisters, as this Bill has the approval of all the passive motor resisters, then we should be happy to pass it. The Prime Minister has told us that on this question of passive resistance in regard to Nonconformists, their action is against all sound logic, all sound morality, and all sound constitutional principles; but when it comes to passive resistance on behalf of the motorists, he at once proceeds to legislate for them. If we wanted an instance that this is not a Government of the people, for the people, and by the people, but a Government of the rich, for the rich, and by the rich, I do not think we could have a better example than we have in this Bill. Need we wonder, then, that the President of the Local Government Board admits the strong feeling in the country. In a letter dated 24th July, he said that there "is an embittered feeling in the general public against all persons who use motor-cars, which, as a dangerous class feeling, is, perhaps, without parallel in modern times." I cordially agree with him. Why does it exist? Is it because the public want the abolition of the speed limit? Is it because the public are not satisfied with the way in which the rural police have administered the law? The right hon. Gentleman himself gives the answer when he says that "the law has been ineffective, and has been brought into contempt. It has failed to protect the public. It has failed to suppress the abuse of the roads by motorists." What the whole country is crying out for at the present time is that you must make the law effective. You must have severer penalties—even imprisonment in certain cases—and some system of registration and licensing. That is done to a certain extent in the Bill. You have a system of registration and licensing, but the other clauses in the Bill are such that, for my part, I would rather do without the Bill as it stands at present than take it.

The main points of the Bill are the abolition of the speed limit except in special dangerous places where the speed is to be ten miles an hour; second, the identification of the motorist; third, the licensing of the motorist; and fourth, the increase of the pecuniary penalties, with imprisonment for driving at a dangerous pace; and fifth, the placing of the County Council under the Local Government Board in regard to the management of motor traffic. With regard to the speed limit, I think the President of the Local Government Board is somewhat disingenuous. He writes letters to the papers, and on the 30th July he said that "the existing law encourages the motorist in the idea that he cannot be touched unless it can be legally proved that he is travelling at a greater speed than twelve miles an hour." And the right hon. Gentleman has suggested again in his speech to-day that the present law is incapable of dealing with a man guilty of dangerous driving. But he himself read out to the Committee a regulation which he had made, and which is the same that he has seen fit to incorporate in the Bill. It must be remembered that that regulation has been in the hands of every magistrate's clerk in the country who has to advise his Bench in these matters, and of every rural policeman; and therefore I say that there is no change effected by this Bill in the existing law whatever in regard to dangerous driving except in one respect, and that is the Clause which says that "the police-constable may apprehend without a warrant the driver of any car who commits an offence within his view." At first sight that seems very severe and drastic, but I should like to know whether that is going to be of any practical use for the public in the end? Let us suppose that a police constable makes an arrest of one of those wealthy motorists whom he comes to the conclusion was driving at a dangerous rate. He brings the motorist before his Bench, and perhaps the Bench refuse to convict, and make strong remarks saying the case had no business to have been brought before them. Immediately an action would be started against the policeman—with the backing of the influential motor clubs—for false imprisonment, and the policeman would be threatened with all the terrors of the law. You would then have one poor policeman against all the wealth of the motoring fraternity. I think, under these circumstances, there would be very few police-constables who would see fit to arrest a motorist under the provisions of this clause. As a matter of fact, this clause would only be of use in two cases—when a policeman sees that the man in possession of a motor-car is obviously drunk, or when he has seen an accident. But that is like shutting the stable door when the steed has been stolen.

Who are the people who are agitating for this abolition of the speed limit. They are only those people who, as a matter of fact, motor for pleasure, and as an exhilarating amusement; and in order that these gentlemen may enjoy their rights, we are asked to turn our country roads into railway lines. It is not demanded for trading purposes—at least, I have not heard of any demand coming from traders for the abolition of the speed limit. We all know that there are motor-omnibuses, and motors used for the conveyance of agricultural produce to market, but the owners of these do not want the abolition of the speed limit. And even if you want light motor-cars to carry perishable agricultural produce to market, you do not want them to go at the rate of more than twelve miles an hour. There is one class of men who do use motor-cars very largely, and who might possibly want the abolition of the speed limit: I mean the medical profession; but I have never seen a single petition from any doctor, or any agitation in the medical world, asking for this abolition of the speed limit. And what is the reason? The doctor knows perfectly well that the public do not like to see these motor-cars driving along the roads at headlong speed. Popularity is as necessary to a doctor as it is to a politician, and therefore a doctor is not likely to use his motor-car in that way. Hence I say that the abolition of the speed-limit is not required in the interests of any trade or profession. What is the position of the general public? If this Bill passes there is nothing in it to prevent a motor-car, if the owner knows the road, and if he thinks it perfectly safe for him, going along the road at any hour of the day or night at the rate of thirty or forty miles an hour. Suppose you are driving along one of these roads in the dark, and you see approaching you two great acetylene lights—which are not at all beautiful—and that as it gets nearer the driver begins to blow the instrument called a horn. Not satisfied with that, suppose the driver has pulled out the sparking plug—I do not know whether that is the correct term or not, at any rate the thing which makes a noise like a Gatling gun—[AN HON. MEMBER: Oh, oh!]—it does, I have heard it; suppose that horrible machine, with all that terrifying noise, rushes past you at the rate of thirty or forty miles an hour? However quiet your horses may be, if there is a ditch handy you will be sure to be in it. The fact of the matter is, that if this Bill passes as it stands, we shall have to give up the use of the roads entirely to the motor fraternity. No one would dare to allow his wife or children to drive along these roads. As the President of the Local Government Board says, this question of the cottages by the roadside is a very important one; but he did not tell us whether he would consent to schedule every road in the country which had a cottage by the road-side, where children were accustomed to play in the road. Of course, if that were the case, the health of these children would suffer. It might be urged that it is illegal for the children to play on the road-side. That may be so, but at the same time, I contend that the health of these children is of much greater importance to the State than the pleasure of the motorists.

Then there is the dust nuisance. The right hon. Gentleman speaks of this nuisance, but he does nothing to prevent it. Everybody knows that the faster a motor car travels the greater is the dust raised. This dust nuisance is really very important to women who live in cottages and houses on the road-side. We used to see the most elegant balloon-like garments floating in the wind as we passed by. Now, these cannot be dried out of doors and that will seriously affect the health and the comfort of the people who live in the country. As I have said before in this House, there is a great deal of difference between the danger of horse locomotion and motor locomotion. When you are driving a horse there are two brains at work—that of the horse and that of the man—and very often that of the horse is much the best, in the event of a difficulty. But with a motor-car there is only one brain. We hear a great deal about the development of road-side Inns. I venture to say that a motorist who has been developing these road-side Inns by taking a glass at several of these will be much more dangerous to the public than a man who has been doing the same thing, but is driving in a trap, and who will be taken care of by his steady old horse. Then, we are told that this abolition of the time limit means the establishment of a great industry in the country. Possibly it may; but at the same time I do not want to see a great industry established except under proper regulations. There is another thing we must recollect, and that is, if you do establish a great industry it is only a change of industry. We are told that horses are to become as extinct as the dodo; and what then is to become of the horse breeders, the harness makers, the coach-builders? All these industries are bound to be hit, for there is only a certain amount of money to be spent in locomotion. People who keep motors will not keep carriages, or at any rate will not keep so many of them, and there will only be a change of employment for the working man; instead of building carriages he will be building motor-cars.

The second point with which this Bill deals, and of which I heartily approve, is the registration of motor-cars. I do think that that is a considerable move in the right direction, but at the same time it would be very difficult indeed to work out. As I understand the Bill, there is to be placed on each motor-car a mark indicating the registered number of the car. I should like to know what kind of mark there is going to be. It would have to be of a very distinctive character indeed, otherwise, when struggling with a restive horse, as the President of the Local Government Board was the other day, it would be impossible for a man to distinguish a mark.

MR. WALTER LONG: My memory is good enough for that.

*MR. SOARES: I am glad to hear it, but some of us are not so gifted, and we should like to know that these marks are going to be of a very distinctive character. Then I strongly object to the amount charged for the registration fee. It is to be the small sum of 5s. The county is to get that, and in return it has to look after the roads, and manage the police, and put up danger signals and boards, which I may point out must be illuminated at night, or else they will be of no use, and they are to get for all that 5s. I call it the height of meanness. You are going to put all these extra rates upon the farmers, whose rates at present are quite high enough, in order that wealthy men may enjoy themselves.

The next point I wish to deal with is the licensing of motorists, which we approve of, but I think, at the same time, that there should be some test of skill before these licences are obtained. To a certain extent this is demanded by the Bill, because it provides that no person under the age of sixteen is to have a licence. I think we are justified in saying that the President of the Local Government Board certainly thinks there should be some test of skill with regard to this matter, but the Bill does not say so. A regulation made by the Local Government Board under the Act of 1896 says, "There shall be in charge of the light locomotive when used on any highway a person competent to control and direct its use and movement." But under this Bill anyone over the age of sixteen years may have a licence, and the licence may be granted to a deaf man, to a short-sighted man, and a man who has gout in his fingers, so that he cannot use the brake; in fact, any kind of cripple is entitled to apply for a licence, and if they do not mind risking their own lives they are to be at liberty to risk the lives of millions of His Majesty's subjects. There is an increase in the penalties which, I think, is a step in the right direction, and if they are not enough, that is a matter we shall be able to amend in Committee.

The next point is a very important one, and that is the putting of the County Councils under the Local Government Board in regard to scheduling these roads. I object to that. The County Councils pay for the roads, and surely they ought to have a right to manage the traffic upon them. We are told now that the County Councils may be re-actionary with regard to motor-cars. You did not say that the County Councils might be re-actionary when you made them responsible for the education of the country. You think that they are competent to manage the education of your children, but you do not think they are competent to regulate motor-cars on the high roads. I consider this is an insult to the County Councils and I am quite sure it will be bitterly resented by the electorate on the very first opportunity.

There is only one other point I wish to deal with. You talk of this motor industry also as a solution of the housing problem. I think it is possible that in time to come it may do something in that direction, but I should like to point out one matter. To assist the housing problem, passing through the suburban places, there will have to be a great many of these cars and you will have to have special roads for them, and therefore with regard to the housing problem the abolition of a speed limit will do no good whatever. I am quite willing to withdraw my opposition to this Bill if the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board will give way on these two points; if he will give us a speed limit and give the control to the County Councils. If he will not do that then I shall ask the House to vote against this Bill on the ground that you are depriving the masses, without their consent, of their birthright to use these roads, on the ground that this Bill is in the interest of the motorists and not of the general public, and that Parliament has no right to turn our roads into railway lines in order that wealthy men may enjoy the amusement of motoring.

*MR. LUKE WHITE (Yorkshire, E. R., Buckrose): In seconding the proposal of the hon. Member who has just sat down I do so because I have given great consideration to the provisions of this Bill, which the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board has asked the House to consider as practical men. In a very few observations I intend to make I shall endeavour to look at this Bill from a practical point of view. With regard to the Bill and many of its provisions there is no doubt a great improvement to the existing law, but taking the Bill as a whole, and especially the clause taking away the speed limit, I think the effect of it will be to make more dangerous, than they are at the present moment, our public roads. We have had five years' experience of motor-cars and we are now to consider the question of the terms on which motor-cars can occupy our public highways. The right hon. Gentleman in this Bill asks the House of Commons to do away with the speed limit, and he asks the House to do so on the ground that the law at the present time is ineffective. Why is it ineffective? Because the penalties are not sufficiently high at the present time. If a severe penalty had been placed on the Statute-book in the first instance, to be increased on the second offence, with a term of imprisonment for the third offence, we should, in my opinion, have heard very little of those motorists who indulge in exceeding the speed limit in this country. With regard to the question of the speed limit the right hon. Gentleman said it is going to be clearly laid down in the Bill that if a person drives a motor-car on the public highway negligently or recklessly, or at a speed which is dangerous to the public, the person guilty of such an offence under the Act will have to suffer a very heavy penalty. I quite agree with the terms of the first clause of the Bill, but I say that in its provisions you must maintain both in the rural districts and in the towns a speed limit, and that if you do so you will minimise, to a great extent, the dangers on the highways. The right hon. Gentleman said he also proposed in certain districts to give the County Councils power, notwithstanding the provisions of the Bill, to make a speed limit not to exceed ten miles an hour. I say that if a speed limit in connection with Clause 1 is necessary for populous places, a speed limit is also necessary in the rural country districts in addition to the provisions of the Bill. I consider as far as populous places are concerned you might, without the speed limit under Clause 1 of this Bill, be able to obtain that safety in our public streets, so far as motorists are concerned, because we have in our streets policemen and people who could make a report of those who were driving recklessly and to the danger of the public, but when you get into the rural districts where policemen are scarce, it is absolutely necessary that you should have a speed limit in order to secure a conviction. I was very sorry to observe the other day that the President of the Local Government Board, in a letter which he directed to be written with regard to this Bill, said that he considered persons driving a motor-car beyond the speed limit laid down by law were only committing a technical offence.

MR. WALTER LONG: The hon. Member misunderstood me. I was attempting to draw a distinction between the offence in the Bill of a motor-car exceeding the speed limit and the offence of driving to the danger of the public.

*MR. LUKE WHITE: I should be sorry if I had misunderstood the right hon. Gentleman, and I think it is therefore right that I should quote the letter to which I refer.

MR. WALTER LONG: I would point out to the right hon. Gentleman that that was part of a considerable correspondence that was going on, and I was endeavouring to show that, with a speed limit of twelve miles an hour, a motorist driving nineteen miles an hour, if there was nobody on the road and there was no danger in any case, was committing, to my mind, a technical offence, when, if driving at the same pace in another county, or driving at a pace to the danger of the public was quite another matter.

*MR. LUKE WHITE: Well, I think when an Act of Parliament says a motorist shall not drive more than twelve miles an hour and the motorist goes nineteen miles an hour he is not guilty of a technical offence, he is guilty of breaking the law. The general public has not made this great disturbance against motorists because they have committed a technical offence. The public complain of the motorists because they defy the rule of the road and endanger the lives and limbs of the people. It is on that account that people are against taking away the speed limit in the rural districts. I represent a very large and extensive rural constituency, and in my constituency, as in many of the counties throughout this country, there are roads which are very narrow. There are many of these roads and lanes, which are public highways which have no footpath, and which are used for all kinds of vehicular traffic, horses, carts, waggons, and other conveyances, and also by men, women, and children, and I say it would be detrimental to the interests of the rural districts and to the village life of the country if the House of Commons does away with the speed limit and allows motorists to use these lanes in the manner they are attempting to do at the present time. I have no prejudice whatever against motoring. I believe the great majority of motorists at the present time drive along public highways with judgment and care, and that the House of Commons, if it had only to deal with persons of that description would find that no legislation would be necessary. But we have to deal with the class of persons known in this country as "scorchers." Men who have had a day or two's experience on a motor-car and who cannot go below a certain limit, but who, day by day, are endeavouring to drive cars along the highway and whose only limit of speed is the limit of the machine they are driving.

Many of the provisions of the Bill will require a great deal of discussion in Committee. I will not go into the general bearing of the question now, but there is one point I should like to refer to, and that is, the provisions contained in Clause 8. I do not think such a provision should be inserted in a Motor-Car Bill, because it gives, in a county, a jurisdiction by the County Council over the highways of the non-county boroughs of such a county, with which they have no concern whatever. In a non-county borough of, say, 20,000 inhabitants, where there is a corporation, and where all the streets and roads are vested in the corporation, which is responsible for their maintenance, you go completely over the heads of the corporation to give to the County Council of the county, and not to the corporation, the power to raise these danger posts, and if that power is to be exercised you are going a long way to bring danger on your rural districts. Assume that a County Council sends its inspector to inspect all dangerous corners, cross-roads and side-roads, and he makes a list which is adopted by the County Council and the Local Government Board, and after that a motorist going through the county comes to a cross-road or a side-road where there is no sign-post and there is an accident, he will at once say—his defence will be—that there was no danger-post at that particular road, and therefore he had a right to go past that cross-road at any speed he liked; this provision, therefore, will be to the detriment and not to the benefit of the public at all. With regard to the Bill as a whole I shall be satisfied if the House of Commons in Committee would make this measure a practical one in the interests of the public, but only upon one ground, which is, that the President of the Local Government Board gives way on the question of the speed limit in rural districts. I appeal to the right hon. Gentleman, in the interest of the rural districts generally, to give way on this point, and, notwithstanding all other safeguards, to allow the rural districts to have the benefit of the speed limit which they have at the present time. Increase the speed limit if it is necessary, and I have no doubt it might be increased to some extent without detriment to the public under certain conditions. I say increase it if you will, but do not pass this Bill into law and allow a motorist to go at any speed he likes, subject to the provision of Clause 1, but put a limit on his speed and safeguard the public from that danger that must ensue if the speed limit is done away with altogether.

Amendment proposed—

"To leave out the word 'now,' and at the end of the Question to add the words 'upon this day three months.'"—(*Mr. Soares.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'now' stand part of the Question."

MR. CRIPPS (Lancashire, Stretford): I admit that for my part I entirely agree with what the two last speakers have said as regards the absolute necessity for a speed limit, although it might be increased under this proposed legislation, and I further agree that the treatment of the County Councils under this Bill is not only derogatory to the powers of those bodies, but is really based on an entire misapprehension of the law relating to highways in this country. I would point out to the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board, if he were present, that the vast majority of our country roads are district highways, with which the County Councils have nothing whatever to do from beginning to end, and of which they have neither knowledge of the conditions nor the control of them, nor do they repair them, and if you put these roads under the County Councils, subject to the Local Government Board, you would really be upsetting the jurisdiction and powers of the local authorities as regards the highways in various parts of the country. That is a matter which no doubt might be set right in Committee. The speech made by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board in my opinion more than justifies the view of those who think the speed limit ought to be retained. No one put more forcibly than he did, and no one recognised more fully, the evils which exist at the present time; but I think that he forgot to make this one remark, that these evils are not the result of legislation but are due to the action of law breakers who disregard legislation, and what we want is not an alteration in the direction of restriction but the power to inflict far higher penalties, that those who break the law may be made amenable to it as regards motor traffic. Now there is another point which was made by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board which struck me very much. He said with regard to the vast majority of roads in this country there ought to be a speed limit, and that only in some cases might there be an exception, and he instanced the case of Salisbury Plain. Now, nothing can be worse when dealing with an admitted evil than to base your legislation upon exceptional cases, and if it is true that on the country roads you ought to have a speed limit it is no argument to say that there are some roads so isolated and so lonely that a speed limit is unnecessary.

Now let me say one word as to the impossibility of the enjoyment of our country roads under the present system. It is a system which interests the country more than the town, for in the towns, in the first place, there is a far larger amount of traffic, and that in itself is a great measure of safety, because motorists cannot go at the extreme pace in towns that they can in country districts. But there is a much more important element than that in the town districts. Suppose you have not a speed limit. In the towns you always have police or members of the police force to see that the law is enforced, but you do not have those police in lonely country lanes, and unless you have some hard-and-fast line by which you can bring the motorists to book, you will have great difficulty in dealing with these motorists in the country districts, and so far from their having the right to go faster over these lonely roads, I say it is exactly in those roads that there is the greatest tendency to accident. It is most important that you should have some speed limit. With regard to the speed limit, let me say that in advocating the speed limit we are not saying that the other conditions of the Bill are not necessary. Everyone admits that it is necessary to license drivers, whatever the conditions may be. It is nothing less than a scandal at the present time that these drivers should be able to get away in the way in which they do without being recognised, and it is absolutely necessary that there should be some way of identifying them—those law breakers, who having conduced to the accidents, very often go away as fast as they can without regard to what has happened.

Let me say, now that the right hon. Gentleman is present, that I think he has quite misunderstood the law as it stands at the present time. That is a very grave allegation to make against the President of the Local Government Board, but as that was part of his argument I will try and substantiate what I say. According to the law as it stands every driver of a motor-car is not only subject to a speed limit by the regulations of the Local Government Board—and I agree here with the views expressed by one of the chief constables in the country that the regulations which now exist are more easily enforceable and better in the interests of the public than those of the proposed Bill—but it is sufficient for my purpose to say, you have the same regulations in both cases. It does not matter whether you are talking about reckless driving, or driving that is neither reasonable nor proper. There is not the slightest doubt that, although the penalties are not sufficiently severe, Section 1 of this Bill does not in any respect increase the liability of motor-car drivers, so that you have the speed limit taken away on the one hand, and no increase of regulations against the motor-car drivers on the other. As compared with the Act of 1835, Section 1 of the Bill does nothing more than put the motor-car drivers in the same position as drivers of ordinary vehicles, but under more favourable conditions. Here it is "reckless driving to the danger of the individual," there it is "furious driving to the danger of the individual." There is no difference in substance. Under Subsection 2, a motor-car driver may be apprehended by a constable, but under the Highways Act any one who sees the offence may apprehend the furious driver without any warrant. So far from this Bill imposing any additional restriction, it is an alleviation of the general law in favour of the motor-car drivers. The limitation of the power of apprehension to constables is a serious matter in the country. It is all very well in the towns, but where in the country will you find police constables to apprehend offenders? Why should a motor-car driver be put in a more favourable position than an ordinary driver? Yet I have heard it more than once argued that this special provision justifies the removal of the speed limit! Then as regards the latter part of the clause. What happens under the general law to an ordinary driver? Under the Act of 1835, if he does not give his name he is liable to three months' imprisonment. I admit there are other things added here, but there is no greater restriction; there is, in fact, an alleviation as compared with the existing law. Some proper form of regulation is necessary in order that the public may enjoy the public highways in the future as they have done in the past. I do not want to go beyond that. If you do you will put upon motor-car drivers and motorists restrictions which no one desires. But we must recollect, as the hon. Member opposite said, it is our birthright to have the common use of these roads, and, speaking as a countryman who lives in a district where the roads are narrow, I say without hesitation that we no longer have as our birthright the common use of these highways. We can no longer go out ourselves without danger; we are afraid to send out our children, and, unless you are as skilled a driver as the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board, you must drive only steady old horses which, instead of requiring to be looked after, look after you.

This is an extremely serious question. It is not a matter which can be put off any longer. But if we are to have legislation—and we ought to have it—we must have it once for all on the best possible basis. Unless we do, such a feeling will arise in the country against motorists and motor-cars that either they will not be allowed to use our roads at all, or they will run an imminent risk of being attacked in some of the country districts. The feeling which has already been aroused cannot be exaggerated. I am sorry it is so, because if only the law had been obeyed —and that is the whole question—there would not have been anything like this outcry. Who have not obeyed the law? I do not want to raise any class question, but those who have not obeyed the law are men who think nothing of a £5 or a £10 fine, who put it down as a part of the expense of their amusement, and either insure against it or laugh at the magistrate when the penalty is imposed. It is a great mistake to assume that the speed limit has been a failure. It has been a failure only in respect of the comparatively inadequate penalty. The police have acted admirably. In some of the northern counties—particularly Yorkshire—they have acted not only admirably but effectively. If you gave your magistrates power on the second or third occasion to send these people to prison you would put an end to a most crying evil. There ought to be some limitation, and it will be the greatest mistake imaginable to remove the chief safeguard, we at present have, as regards our country roads. With regard to the powers of the County and District Councils, what are these roads which are being destroyed as far as the common user is concerned? Take the District Council roads. They are roads which have been given and repaired by, and which belong to, the local people, and yet you are to allow the use of these roads to be taken out of the hands of the local people by those who have no interest in the district, who have done nothing to create the roads, and who do not pay a penny towards their repair or maintenance. The only effect of the Bill is, apparently, to impose upon the locality certain expense for the erection of notices and so forth. No reason has been given by the right hon. Gentleman for the removal of the speed limit. All the other regulations in this Bill could, and ought, to co-exist with the speed limit. Depend upon it, if these motorists and motor-cars are not kept in order they will have to leave our roads altogether, because in the long run the people will never submit to the intolerable nuisance which has been created.

MR. WILLIAM MCARTHUR (Cornwall, St. Austell): I should like to say at once that I am not one of those people who have an antipathy to motor-cars. I am not a motorist myself. A horse is good enough for me, and until I am unable to ride or drive I should prefer a horse to a motor-car. But the question of the motor-car is not altogether a rich man's question. It is quite possible that there may be developments of the industry, both as regards the employment given by the manufacture of these cars and as to the use to which they may be put in the country, which will give the common people a much greater interest in the motor-car than they have at present. I therefore am not prejudiced against the cars. On the other hand, I am certainly strongly opposed to this Bill as it stands, and unless some prospect of modification is held out I shall vote against the Second Reading and oppose its further progress to the best of my ability. Perhaps I speak a little feelingly on the matter, because in order to reach my home in the country I have to drive about a mile and a quarter along the Brighton road, and everybody who has to travel along that road knows what an unmitigated curse and nuisance the motor may become when it is driven by a person hardly competent to drive, or who is careless of the safety or convenience of other users of the road. Along that road there is a constant stream of motors, and I have been practically compelled to give up the use of the road, and to forbid my children to ride along it. A large part of the difficulty is caused by incompetent drivers. Personally I have no complaint to make about the great bulk of the people who use and drive motor-cars. I have found the bulk of them perfectly ready to stop, but I have found some who are simply ruffians, and who ought to receive the severest punishment the law can give. I have seen cars describing a series of S's as they came along the road, so utterly incompetent were the drivers. The point I want to make is this: If a man is to be put on the public road in control of one of these powerful machines there ought to be some guarantee that he knows what he is doing when he gets on the driver's seat. I should not be allowed to drive a four-wheeled cab down the Thames Embankment without my capacity to drive being subjected to some sort of test, and yet under this Bill it is seriously proposed that anyone who applies for a licence should be put in charge of a ton of iron which can be driven at sixty miles an hour, and nothing is to happen unless he commits an offence. This appears to be a most preposterous position, and there is no comparison whatever between the man who drives a motor-car and the man who drives an ordinary horse. There is no comparison whatever as to the amount of danger. I do not think that this Bill ought to be passed unless the right hon. Gentleman is willing to consent to some test of efficiency being applied to the people who apply for these licences. If I am asked what that test ought to be, and what machinery I would suggest for examining these people, I would reply that that is not my business. I am not a person desiring to drive at sixty miles an hour, and, personally, I do not want anybody else to do it. I think it is the business of the Government to provide machinery to insure that the man who is granted a licence must show that he is capable of controlling his motor-car, knows how to drive, and is a skilled person as regards driving. I do not know whether the right hon. Gentleman agrees with me in that.

Mr. WALTER LONG: Hear, hear.

Mr. WILLIAM McARTHUR: Do I understand then that the Government in Committee will be willing to insert words providing that there shall be a test of efficiency for people who apply for licences?

Mr. WALTER LONG: I shall be prepared to make the certificate, which is now only a certificate authorising to drive, one which will be only granted after there has been some test of efficiency applied.

Mr. WILLIAM McARTHUR: I am much obliged to the right hon. Gentleman for that statement, and under the circumstances I will not pursue my remarks. If a real test of efficiency is applied, I think it will increase the safety of the public. I thank the right hon. Gentleman for the position he has taken up.

Mr. SCOTT-MONTAGU (Hampshire, New Forest): In the speeches which have been made during this debate I notice a great many complaints have been brought forward which I think will be very largely remedied by the Bill now before the House. As an illustration may I be permitted to say, first of all, with reference to the last declaration made by the President of the Local Government Board, that if the public and the House wish the certificate he proposes to grant to be one of efficiency I am quite sure no motorist will object. I will point out, however, that such a certificate is in no degree a real guarantee of safety and will do nothing to cure the evils which I think we are all united in wishing to remedy. The examination which a driver undergoes in France, Germany, and other countries consists of a test of his knowledge of the engine and of his skill in the management of the engine and car combined. But the rash man may be a skilled engineer, and a man may perhaps be the finest driver in Europe and yet be wanting in consideration towards the other users of the road and the public generally. My experience is that in the worst cases of motor scorchers, or "road hogs," the men are nearly always very skilled, and their skill breeds a confidence that is dangerous The speeches of the mover and the seconder of the rejection of this Bill contained many amusing points to one who was listening to the debate from the opposite point of view. The hon. Member for the Barnstaple Division of Devonshire suggested, amongst other things, that motorists desire to monopolise the roads. That is not so, because they only wish to be included as part of the public who have the right to use the roads. As one of the public, and as one who rides and drives, as well as one who drives a motor-car, I can say that no motorist has ever expressed a wish to monopolise the highways; but nevertheless the tendency in this country is to make our highways more suitable for fast traffic and to increase the facilities for so doing. It may be that in the future the fast traffic will increase out of all proportion to the slow traffic, but it is no argument to say that on this account motorists wish to monopolise the roads. The hon. Member also referred in his speech to a fear that motor-cars would supersede horses and do a great deal of harm to horse breeding. I do not believe the introduction of motor-cars will ever affect the riding of horses; the prophecies that have been made are as likely to be falsified as have been those made when railways were introduced in this country. May I read an extract from a speech which was made from the same Benches in the year 1826—

Extract from Sir Isaac Coffin's speech in House of Commons, 6th April, 1826, Liverpool and Manchester Railway—

> "How would any person like to have a railroad under his parlour window? What was to be done with all those who had advanced money in making and repairing turnpike roads? What will those who may still wish to travel in their own or hired carriages after the fashion of their forefathers do? What was to become of coach-makers and harness-makers, coach masters and coachmen, inn-keepers, horse breeders and horsedealers? Was the House aware of the smoke and noise, the hiss and the whirl which locomotive engines passing at the rate of ten or twelve miles an hour would occasion? Neither the cattle ploughing in the field or grazing in the meadows could behold them without dismay. Iron would be raised in price 100 per cent., or more probably exhausted altogether! It would be the greatest nuisance, the most complete disturbance of quiet and comfort in all parts of the kingdom that the ingenuity of man could invent."

We have lived to see those gloomy prophecies utterly falsified. In the early days of bicycles the same objections as are now being urged against us were raised against them. I remember that some ten years ago, when it was not considered quite convenable for a Member of Parliament to ride a bicycle, much the same sort of thing was said about bicycles. I remember coming to this House in 1893 riding a bicycle, and being the object of some amusement and derision to the cabdrivers and policemen because I came down in a manner which was considered improper for a Member of Parliament. Opposition to new methods of conveyance and to their development has always come in the same kind of way.

This Bill as it stands to-day I am confident would not be supported by any motorist Member of this House unless he was conscious that he was looking at the question from a public point of view. If I took a selfish view of this question I should vote against this Bill because it is going to place tremendous penalties in the hands of magistrates, some of whom are intensely prejudiced, and have announced that their object is to suppress motoring. This Bill puts into the hands of these gentlemen penalties which I am sure the hon. Member for the Stretford Division of Manchester will agree are unprecedented as regards any other form of traffic. Hon. Members who oppose this Bill should remember that motorists are being treated with far more severe penalties than anything which has yet been enacted for other users of the highways. There is, for instance, the power to arrest under Section 2 of Clause 1, which the hon. Member referred to. I quite agree that that power exists in the old Act, but it is not weakened by insertion in this Bill, nor is it merely repeated, for there are heavier penalties for infringement, and it will draw the attention of magistrates to this power of suppressing reckless driving. There is a clause in this Bill which I think is quite unique. There is an obligation imposed upon motorists, under a penalty of £10 to stop in case an accident occurs. I thoroughly and cordially agree with this particular section, but allow me to point out that under similar circumstances there is no obligation on anybody else to stop on the road after causing an accident. In future a person knocked down by a dog-cart or van or a hansom cab is in a far worse position than a person knocked down by a motor-car. [Cries of dissent] Well, can any hon. Member tell me of any Act under which the driver of any other kind of vehicle is obliged to stop in case of accident. I think not. [Cheers.] With regard to the "control" areas I think the ten miles an hour limit will be of great advantage to the public. However, I would point out that very often an ordinary dog-cart goes along the road at twelve miles an hour, and therefore I think ten miles an hour is too slow for practical purposes. Then there is a provision for the deprivation of licences in case of serious misconduct. I think hon. Gentlemen have rather overlooked the great safeguard that this provision will be. I agree in the desirability of this power being inserted, and I think it is a concession to the public which they ought to have. Hon. Gentlemen who oppose the Bill do not seem to appreciate it from the public's point of view.

The question as to what advantage motorists get under this Bill is one of much debate, and I can only tell hon. and right hon. Gentlemen that, so far as I can judge from the letters I have received, motorists oppose the Bill. I have incurred a good deal of odium from my brother motorists for favouring the Bill. More than a year ago I introduced an identification Bill into this House, and this year I again introduced a Bill dealing with registration and licensing, and, therefore, I cannot be accused of having wantonly opposed the interests of the public. There is another argument which has been used by hon. and right hon. Gentlemen, which I do not think is quite correct. They say, "Why should the ratepayer in the rural districts be called upon to keep up main roads and other roads for the sake of motorists?" Well, that is a very specious argument on the face of it. But prior to 1888 there was a grant-in-aid towards main roads amounting to 50 per cent. of their cost. Since County Council government came into operation, grants-in-aid of local taxation superseded the amounts previously granted. The State has therefore rightly considered that a man who travels from London to York is a person who ought to pay the proportion of the upkeep of the roads, and these grants-in-aid are made on account of the long-distance traveller, and only half the cost is borne by the localities. It has been said several times during the debate that this is a class question. It is not a class question. Do hon. and right hon. Gentlemen realise that there are 20,000 motor cycles in this country? I venture to say that by this time next year there will probably be three times as many motor-cycles as motor-cars. And if you could analyse the motor-cars it would be found that not more than one in ten costs more than £500 or £600. There are a large number of cars used by the professional classes of the country who are not at all rich men, and who cannot afford to keep a coachman and horses. They use motor-voitinettes, which cost from £100 to £200. These are rapidly increasing, and they ought not to be lost sight of. It is assumed that when a gentleman uses cars he must necessarily be a rich man. According to that argument I should be a very rich man indeed; I only wish I was. A small motor-car nowadays is within the reach of anyone who can own a brougham and pair of horses, or even a dog-cart. I would only say that so far as regards the motorists' point of view of the Bill, if we consulted solely our personal interests, we should not be over-keen to see Second Reading carried, but we shall support it for the sake of the future. We feel quite as strongly as the gentlemen who differ from us, about the road scorcher. It is because this Bill gives proper safeguards to the public, and is, I think, a fair compromise on a very difficult question, that I shall support the Second Reading.

MR. LAWSON WALTON (Leeds, S.): The hon. Member who has just spoken as a motorist has, I think, been the first Member of the House who has supported the measure introduced by the President of the Local Government Board. The House is indebted to the hon. Member for having called attention to a few of those questions which were entirely overlooked by some of my hon. friends behind me. It has been assumed by the assailants of this measure that the motorist is an intruder on the highway, that he has no right there, that he has a precarious tenure obtained under certain statutes, that he is regulated by previous measures, and that it is proposed that he should be still further restricted by the measure before the House. Now it would be well, before one forms an opinion as to the measure proposed, to get rid of the notion that an ordinary passenger who uses the highway on foot, or uses it on any form of vehicle, has a higher right to the use of that highway than the motorist. The right and the obligation rest equally upon all who make use of the highway. As I understand the law the highway must be used reasonably. There is no absolute duty, it is a relative duty, it must be used relatively to the rights, convenience and safety of others who are equally entitled to avail themselves of the dedication of the owner of the land who created the highway. Now, if that is so, one has to ask one's self the simple question whether it is possible to regulate the use of the highway by those high travelling machines in such a way as to permit of its safe use by other persons who may travel on foot, or by children who may play on the highway, or persons who may be driving a restive pair of horses. Well, of course, it is quite possible for the House to say that the use of the highway by machines capable of travelling at express speed, and which in point of fact do on occasion travel at express speed regardless of consequences, shall be altogether prohibited. If the House is not prepared to take that step, some medium line must be found by which, if possible, the user of the highway for motor-cars may be so regulated as not to interefere with vehicles of other sorts.

I confess that when I approached this Bill I looked at it very much in the same way as some of my hon. friends behind. I thought it an inefficient and bad Bill. I thought it was a Bill framed in the interest of motorists, and I was rather led to that conclusion by the unfortunate fact that the first section of the Bill creates an offence, and in creating the offence simply defines the existing law. That is perfectly true. As the hon. Member for the Stretford Division pointed out, the first section is a mere definition of the existing law. The motorist uses the highway subject to the obligations of the common law and subject to the obligations created under the statute of 1888, and no motorist can use the highway unless his vehicle be skilfully and carefully guided, unless it is under control, and driven so that no nuisance to the public or to a private person is occasioned by the use to which the vehicle is put. It appears that the strong objection to the Bill is that you are introducing restrictive legislation by merely defining the existing law and re-enacting existing penalties. The answer to that argument is that you could not have a more stringent law than that which exists at the present moment. If you are to allow motorists to use the highway at all you must enact that they shall use the highway carefully, without negligence, without recklessness, without undue speed, and with due consideration for the convenience and safety of other persons who have an equal right to its use. If you find the law severe enough as it stands the only question that arises is whether or not you can make its application more efficient than at present, so as to check the nuisance which we all feel. Now, is that possible? The right hon. Gentleman has called attention to various provisions in the Bill which certainly do render possible a very much more strengthened application of these legal provisions. Identification of the offender is made easy, detection is greatly facilitated, and prosecution is rendered easy. The task of the police is made simple and many impediments cast in their way at present are removed. You have constituted a tribunal which has as little sympathy with motorists as possibly it has with the poacher, namely, a bench of county magistrates. You can prosecute the motorist by the instrumentality of the police. If you can submit a case to the decision of a bench of county magistrates it seems to me that you have done a great deal towards rendering the administration of the law efficient. Various hon. Members have said that this is entirely insufficient, because there is no speed limit, and I understand that is the cardinal question on which the fate of the Bill will depend.

Is it desirable to have a speed limit? The proposal of a speed limit is exceedingly seductive, it simplifies the definition of recklessness, undue speed, and the careless use of the highway. It substitutes for the exceedingly elastic and flexible standard of this section the simple question Aye or No, a decision arrived at by a stop-watch at what rate the particular machine was travelling.

*MR. BURDETT-COUTTS (Westminster): The proposal is to add a speed limit to the other safeguards already in the Bill.

MR. LAWSON WALTON: At all events I think the motorist is to have very little chance if he exceeds the speed limit. If you once enact a maximum limit, practice shows that it almost always becomes a minimum limit. In other words, if you say that a locomotive shall not travel more than fifteen miles an hour, the impression is created that it may travel at fifteen miles an hour. That is a test which every policeman understands and which he will apply. Surely nothing can be more illogical than to apply a fixed limit of speed to the regulation of the transit of a vehicle over the roadway, where the obligations for care vary infinitely, where the risks are numerous, and where what would be safe in one case would be exceedingly dangerous in another.

MR. BURDETT-COUTTS: I think the right hon. Gentleman will see from the way in which diverse opinions with regard to this Bill are distributed about the Benches, that it ought not to be made a Party matter. Of all the Bills ever brought into this House, this one least merits Party treatment. I certainly hope the right hon. Gentleman will not make the absence of a speed limit a Party matter because such insistence will wreck the Bill. I must vote against the Bill unless that matter be left to the Committee. The Bill, without a speed limit—and I speak not of its intention, because I give the right hon. Gentleman full credit for good intention, but of its operation and result—is a Bill to promote danger to life and inconvenience in their daily avocations amongst the vast majority of His Majesty's subjects. I will not talk about class legislation; it is rather a piece of sectional legislation, to permanently sanction to a comparatively small number of wealthy and luxurious people a right which in practice they have illegally seized upon, and which, as it is utterly inconsistent with popular rights, they should be summarily deprived of, and not confirmed in. I regret that the Bill has been introduced into the House of Lords first. That may have been only an error of judgment; but it is certainly unfortunate when we are dealing with a piece of sectional and anti-popular legislation. One would have thought that a Bill injuriously affecting a great majority of the voters in every constituency represented by hon. Members was a matter primarily and mainly for this House to consider and formulate; and that it was neither necessary, nor consistent with the spirit of our legislative procedure, to bring to bear on the general scope, or the detailed provisions, of the Bill the prior support of large majorities in the House of Lords. I cannot in the least understand the arguments of those who profess to wish to secure a safe and proper use of the highway, and in the same breath say that in order to do so you must not have a speed limit. Excessive speed has always been recognised to be a dangerous and inconvenient use of the road and the street. Still less can I understand the argument of the hon. Gentleman who has just spoken that because you have a speed limit, therefore you cannot have the other provisions and safeguards in the Bill. When you have a speed limit you have something certain, a mathematical test, to go on. You propose to supply its place by a vague expression as to "reckless driving" or "driving at a speed which is dangerous to the public." One objection constantly raised against a speed limit is that the person who takes the time—the policeman—both makes mistakes and gives false evidence But by removing a speed limit you are placing a far heavier, more delicate, and more doubtful responsibility on this officer of the law, whom you call incompetent and unreliable. You are removing a check on him which—although he may make mistakes—gives a certain mechanical certainty. With the speed limit it is the stop-watch against the motor-car. But by this Bill he has to assume a far different office. He becomes—this person whom you can not trust when he has a mathematical or mechanical guide to aid him—the judge of a phrase, the sole interpreter of a lengthy clause in a Bill. He, acting on his sole unaided judgment, is the arbiter of your destinies. ["No: The Magistrates."] It is absurd to suppose if you cannot trust this officer with the lesser and more fixed responsibility you can trust him with the greater and vaguer one.

MR. WALTER LONG: Anyone on the road, the hon. Gentleman or myself, could bring the charge.

MR. BURDETT-COUTTS: Of course; if the policeman is not there there is no charge brought.

MR. WALTER LONG: If a humble individual like myself is driven over by the motor-car, what is there in the Bill to prevent me bringing a charge against the driver, although I am not a police constable?

MR. BURDETT-COUTTS: But what is the case now? The great majority of the charges are brought by the police. That is exactly what will happen in the future. And my point is that by removing the speed limit you are making those mistakes on the part of the police more possible and more likely; and my answer to the hon. Gentleman the Member for Leeds is that there is not the slightest reason why you should not have the two safeguards combined; both your first clause with your other provisions for safety in this Bill, and the added certainty of the speed limit. That would meet the sensible objection that a speed limit is not of itself an assurance of safety to non-motorists, and the puerile objection that if there is a speed limit, the motorists will come to think that is the only legitimate check on his actions, and that so long as he keeps within the speed limit, he is keeping within the law. It would be perfectly easy to make it clear in the Bill, both to the motorist and to the magistrate, that the two safeguards—the speed limit and the provisions to secure the safety of passengers within it—were not exclusive of each other. The great advantage would be that it would be submitting a large number—probably the majority—of cases of offence to a matter of mathematically ascertainable fact, and leave the smaller number of such offences to a matter of opinion or interpretation of a clause by the police constable.

I should like to make a remark or two on one argument which is used in favour of motor-cars, or rather in favour of their being granted an excessive rate of speed on the highway—because I am not, and no one is, against motor-cars, if they are reasonably and properly used. The argument may be called the industrial argument, that by limiting the speed we are limiting the introduction and growth of a valuable industry in this country. And there is a sort of suggestion attached, that we are also limiting the use of the motor-car for industrial purposes, *i.e.*, for use as a means of conveyance for the masses. Let me deal with the latter idea first. If motor-cars come to be used as a means of public conveyance they will never be used at the extreme speed made legal by this Bill. Therefore the excess of speed is the differentia between motor-cars used as a public convenience and motor-cars used as a luxury. The effect of this Bill will be to legalise their use as a luxury, and if you do not place a speed limit in it, it will stand always on the Statute-book as a Bill passed for the benefit of the privileged few. Now, as to limiting a valuable industry, *i.e.*, the manufacture of motor-cars. At present the vast majority of people, both capitalists and wage-earners, who will suffer by this limitation, are foreigners. Look at the great majority of these hideous machines, which cost from £1,000 to £2,000 apiece, and go fifty miles an hour along our roads, scattering death and destruction and terror and inconvenience amongst the humbler users of the highway. What are the names on them — Panhard, Daimler, Mors, Mercedes, Peugeot. They are all foreigners.

MR. SCOTT-MONTAGU: Does the hon. Member know that nearly every one of the makers he has named has branches in England?

MR. BURDETT-COUTTS: Yes; but the money made by these foreigners goes abroad. I hear they make 200 per cent. profit on every machine. They talk about these being wonderful inventions, and that it is wrong to arrest at its birth such a great discovery. But motor-cars were invented before railways, and have lain *in statu quo* for seventy or eighty years. There is no department in which the inventive faculty has been so torpid, or mechanical enterprise so miserably slow, as in motor-cars

AN HON. MEMBER: That is because of the restrictions placed upon them.

MR. BURDETT-COUTTS: Those restrictions were placed on them and maintained for the sake of the public convenience, and no other class of invention in this country has ever had to rely upon conditions which sacrifice the public convenience to the privilege of the few. An hon. Member has quoted the case of the early opposition to railways and tried to draw an analogy between that and the present opposition to motor-cars. As I have already said, I am not opposed to motor-cars. I am only opposed to their improper use. But what is the true analogy between the introduction of railways and the present proposals? When people came to Parliament eighty years ago and asked to be allowed to develop this sort of locomotion at an excessive speed on the public road, what did Parliament do? It said to them: "If you want to use these engines you must build a road for them yourselves"; and it compelled them to build railroads, which took them off the highway. But Parliament did something more. It was so careful of the public interest that it compelled the railway companies to give any private individual the right to run his own engine and carriages along the lines they had built. That was the spirit in which Parliament guarded public interest as compared with the spirit of these proposals which, without a speed limit, will guard only the interests of the privileged few. I will conclude by again begging the right hon. Gentleman not to wreck his Bill by omitting the speed limit.

*MR. NORMAN (Wolverhampton, S.): There is hardly a statement of the hon. Gentleman who has just spoken that anyone who has studied, even in an elementary way, the question of motoring could not reply to. The hon. Gentleman said that there was no question involved of injuring industries in this country, as all the cars were manufactured abroad; but there was already a very large industry in the manufacture of motor-cars, and motor-cycles in this country, and many work men and a large amount of capital were employed in connection with it. The reason why many cars had foreign names, and were manufactured abroad, was because of legislation in this country which had compelled a motor-car to be preceded by a man carrying a red flag, whereas abroad motor-cars had long been given the legitimate use of the roads. Therefore, the argument of the hon. Gentleman on that point fell to the ground. Any stranger listening to this debate would draw the conclusion from the speeches of many hon. Gentlemen that motorists were in the habit of killing men and women and leaving corpses of little children strewn about the village streets. The precise contrary is the case. A motor-car is the safest vehicle using the roads to-day; and I am prepared to substantiate that statement. In the whole of the metropolitan police district, which covers an enormous area, during the year 1902 not one person was killed by a light locomotive of any kind or description. A motor-car journal has very wisely been collecting the statistics of persons killed by horse vehicles; and the number killed or injured during a period of eight or nine months has been about 7,000. Therefore, as a matter of fact, not as a matter of opinion, there is less damage done to the public by motor-cars than by any other vehicle using the road. I should explain, of course, that that statement must be taken in a proportionate sense, but even proportionately it is true. Anyone would imagine that motorists desired to insure murderous persons against punishment. As a matter of fact, no one was more opposed to what was commonly known as "the road hog" than the motorists, because motorists suffer more from such persons than any other class of the community. [AN HON. MEMBER: How?] Well, by inducing speeches like that just delivered by the hon. Gentleman opposite for one thing. We admit that there are a certain unmber of men who use motor-cars to-day with the grossest disregard of the rights of others. We admit that, and we deplore it. We hold that there is just one way of all others to stop them, and that is what has been proposed by motorists themselves, namely, identification. As soon as a man knows that his car carries a mark of identification which is able to bring a policeman ringing at his front door within forty-eight hours, that will be effective enough to prevent 90 per cent. of motoring offences. The remaining 10 per cent. can only be suppressed by heavy fines and imprisonment. The severest punishment that can be inflicted on a man driving rapidly round sharp corners or through village streets will have the sympathy of 999 out of every 1,000 motorists. I think it would be to the public advantage if it were generally believed that the fact that a man drives a motor-car does not make him, all at once, a ruffian. After all, motorists are much like other people. I have driven a motor-car a great deal myself, and I have often driven at a fast speed, but I do not think I ever put anybody to any danger or inconvenience except by reason of dust, which motorists admit is a grave discomfort. If hon. Gentlemen would only start with the belief that motorists are as well disposed towards the public as others, and have an equally kindly feeling, it would enable us to discuss this Bill more profitably.

My hon. friend the Member for the New Forest made a comparison between the opposition which was offered to railways and bicycles and that which is now being offered to motor-cars. I know of nothing, however, about which so much persistent misrepresentation has been published as about the motor-car. It is a strong thing to say; but there are really people in this country who invent deliberate lies in order to injure motorists. There was the case the other day, quoted by Lord Camperdown in the House of Lords, but which he withdrew when he found it was baseless, about a certain young lady whose horse was frightened by a motor-car and who was thrown into a ditch, the motorist driving away. That was investigated by some motorists, and it was found that there was no question of a motor-car at all. The young lady herself said that she did not see a motor-car, but that her horse was frightened by a threshing machine. Even *The Times* printed a letter the other day in which it was stated that a motor-car was seen at Maidenhead covered with mud, and that the ostler told the writer the *chauffeur* had told him that it had been driven from London at the rate of ninety-two miles an hour, which was, of course, perfectly ludicrous. Yet so great is the genuine and honest ignorance on this subject that the greatest paper in the world prints a letter of that kind. *The Times* also published a statement that the dropping of petrol poisons streams and ponds along the roads; but the best way to disprove that statement is to drop petrol on one's hand, when it will be found to disappear without stain or smell. I hope my hon. friend the member for the Barnstaple division will forgive me for saying that his description of one motor-car passing another at night at a speed of forty miles an hour with its sparking-plug out, possesses a peculiar humour, which can only be appreciated by motorists. The greatest mistake, and one which has cropped up in every speech delivered against the Bill this afternoon, is that the motor-car is the rich man's toy. I do not know what one can do to dispel that delusion. Is a motor-cycle a rich man's toy; or is the little motor-car which costs £125, or £135, or £170 a rich man's toy? These small cars are now being sold in very large numbers; and one firm even at the end of the motoring season is putting

1,000 of these cars on the market. Are these cars rich men's toys? If so, is a pony and trap a rich man's toy? My point is a car of that kind, allowing for depreciation, can be kept for little more than the cost of an ordinary horse and trap; therefore, unless a horse and trap is a rich man's toy, how can the small motor-car be a rich man's toy?

Finally, as to the question of the speed limit, motorists wish the speed limit abolished, not because they want to drive at an excessive pace, say seventy or eighty miles an hour, which is all nonsense, but in order that if they are punished they may be punished for a genuine offence they have committed. At the present moment a motorist is punished for going at the rate of twelve-and-a-half miles an hour in circumstances of absolute safety. The police set traps in the early morning in places like the Hog's Back; and no one can realise, except those who have suffered from them, how absurd are many of the offences for which motorists are fined. The motorists' point is that, if they are punished, they should be punished for a real offence. The hon. and learned Gentleman the Member for the Stretford Division used an argument with which there is a great deal of sympathy on the other side of the House. He asks, Why should motorists go faster than the present traffic? But why should they not? Surely, if they desire to go faster, and if it can be done with safety, as we contend it can, why should they not be allowed to do so? I do not think that the President of the Board of Trade need have any very great anxiety in connection with the argument that motor-car traffic ought to be stopped because it goes faster than horse and trap traffic. With regard to horses, every motorist knows that horses which are alarmed at motor-cars are becoming very rare. Hon. Members who disagree speak perhaps from knowledge of one or two horses, but a motorist passes thousands of horses. My own experience is that it is becoming very rare for a horse to be alarmed at a motor. In Ireland the other week, when everybody went at any speed they pleased, so intelligent were the people, and so well were the horses handled, that it was very rarely

indeed that a horse was frightened and nobody was injured.

MR. DELANY (Queen's County, Ossory): I only escaped with my life.

*MR. NORMAN: With regard to children and horses, there would be just as much danger if there were a speed limit of twenty-five miles. I believe that if this Bill passes, the rate of speed from point to point will be less than at present. Under the Bill special areas will be marked out by the local authorities, in which the rate of speed will be reduced to ten miles an hour, under very heavy penalties, and I honestly believe that a motorist will make slower progress under the regulations provided by this Bill than at present. Motorists desire the abolition of the speed limit in order that reckless motorists and professional motorists in the employ of the makers—and they are the greatest offenders — may not imagine that because a certain speed is mentioned that that speed is always permissible. If a limit of twenty-five miles an hour were fixed, a motorist would defend himself on the ground that he was only travelling twenty-four miles. A motorist must be responsible for the safety of the public at whatever pace he goes, and that is the only means by which the public safety can be guaranteed. I think that every motorist will desire to support this Bill. Every advance in invention necessarily brings some disadvantage. No one can deny that there are certain disadvantages connected with motor-cars. There is the question of dust; but every effort is being made to find some means to prevent that inconvenience. No legislation can possibly stop the progress of motor-cars. Legislation may possibly postpone that progress, and give a great advantage to foreign manufacturers; but it cannot stop it. Motoring is going to have an enormous social effect in this country, by placing long distances within the reach of every moderately well to-do member of the community. It is going to enlarge the scope of social life far more than is yet realised. In a few years there will not be a horse-drawn van in the streets of London. That is my firm conviction. I believe that when a motor-cycle which will enable a man to cover fifteen or twenty miles just as easily as he can now cover five miles on an ordinary bicycle is by means of deferred payments within the reach of every well to-do artisan, it must necessarily have a very considerable effect upon the housing problem in large cities. These things are coming, and they cannot be stopped. The motor-car industry is going to be one of the greatest in this country. It may be delayed, but stopped it cannot be; and, therefore, I most earnestly desire that we shall arrive at some common ground of agreement. In conclusion, I would say, as I began, that motorists are at least as well disposed towards their fellow creatures as any other class of the community, and we shall only get a good Bill if hon. Gentleman will only bring themselves to believe so.

SIR PHILIP MUNTZ (Warwickshire, Tamworth): Some years ago this House imposed a common-sense restriction of twelve miles an hour on the speed of ordinary vehicular traffic. I and many other Members of this House believe that that was a wise and necessary regulation, and we fail to see why motors should be allowed to be driven at a greater speed than the ordinary traffic. Motor-cars are much more dangerous. If they collide with other vehicles it means the destruction of the latter, and I really cannot understand why the right hon. Gentleman, having at last taken up this matter, should have removed the speed limit. With this exception the Bill is an excellent one; it will require a few minor Amendments in Committee, but otherwise it contains everything we require for the control of the motor traffic. Having carefully watched and seen the danger and inconvenience of that traffic in the Midland counties, I am not prepared to leave it to the motorists to determine at what speed it is safe to travel. If for no other reason than to give motorists an indication of the speed at which they might travel, I think this House ought to impose a reasonable limit, which, in my opinion, should be that at present fixed for ordinary vehicular traffic. If that were included in the Bill, I should be quite prepared to vote for the Second Reading, but unless we have a pledge that such a limit will be inserted I shall vote against the Bill. It would be dangerous—almost wicked—to allow racing-mad motorists to travel at whatever speed they thought to be safe. They have no idea of what is safe; but if you fix a definite limit it will act as a guide to them. I understand the principal reason for omitting the speed limit to be that the present restriction has not been effective. Why has it not been effective? Because there was no means of identification. Means of identification ought to have been established long since. If they had been in existence not only the police but every private individual who saw a motor travelling at excessive speed could have taken out a summons against the owner. It should be made impossible for any man who commits an offence to escape. This is no trifling matter. I have received hundreds of letters on the subject from every part of the Kingdom and all sections of the community, urging me to press my objection to the Bill unless a speed limit is introduced. The feeling among agriculturists is so intense that many of them state that unless such a limit is introduced they will not consider the right hon. Gentleman worthy of their support in the future. Many of these letters are couched in language which is neither polite nor Parliamentary; I have some in my pocket which came to hand this morning and might be edifying to the House. [Cries of "Read"].

Then there is the dust question. It looks a very simple matter, and an hon. Member opposite has said that something is to be done to prevent dust. I am an old user of the roads, and I do not believe in roads on which there will be no dust. The farmers are indignant beyond description. The hon. Member opposite says that nobody has been killed in the Metropolis during the last twelve months. That may be so, but among the agricultural community there have been several cases in which men have been nearly frightened to death, horses have had to be killed, and much valuable property has been destroyed You cannot be surprised that agriculturists view the matter with great dissatisfaction Farmers do not dare send out wagons except with more attendants than used to be the case, and that is a serious matter in the way of expense. I would urge all my friends who represent agricultural constituencies in this House to vote against the Bill unless a reasonable speed limit is introduced. The value of property is in many cases being absolutely destroyed. I know a beautiful suburban residential district in which not only are rents having to be reduced, but it is being found impossible to let the houses at all, simply because of the motor traffic nuisance, caused by the excessive speed and the dust arising therefrom. Why should the people be driven out of their gardens, and, instead of enjoying the summer evenings, be compelled to go inside and shut all the doors and windows? I contend that in the interest of all classes of the community it is most important that some restriction of speed should be imposed, the dust nuisance dealt with, and the present danger to life and limb removed.

MAJOR JAMESON (Clare, W.): Hon. Members must have been somewhat astonished at the arguments which have been adduced for and against this Bill. The hon. Member opposite says he has had communications not only from his own constituents, but from all parts of the Kingdom. The reason why those letters have been sent to him is very simple. He is well-known as a horseman, and his name has been familiar in the shires for the last 50 years. I myself have often seen him galloping along the roads more rapidly than any motor-car I ever saw in my life. As to the speed limit, there are times when it is safe to go much above the present limit, and there are other times when it is dangerous to go at even five miles an hour. How, then, any reasonable man can argue in favour of a hard and fast line passes my comprehension. The hon. Member for Westminster brought forward entirely new reasons for imposing a limit. The first was that as the House of Lords had first dealt with this Bill, a speed limit should at once be inserted. Another extraordinary suggestion was that foreigners made these cars, and therefore the speed should be restricted. Why is the hon. Member so very English? I always understood that he himself came from the other side of the water. The hon. Member for Barnstaple objected that the President of the Local Government Board had given too much attention to the Bill, and that the supporters of the Bill were motorists who knew something about the subject, and who ought, therefore, to be disqualified from speaking on the question We were also told that the roads were not made for motors. Neither were rabbits made for skinning. Motors have as much right on the roads as the hon. Member himself with his carriage. The hon. Member also told us that this was entirely a rich man's Bill, and he drew a piteous picture of certain garments, covered with dust, fluttering in the midnight air. I venture to say that those garments would flutter away just the same even if there were no motors, except in the Highlands, where they do not wear them. In Ireland we have had an object-lesson with regard to motor-cars. There were over a thousand motor-cars in Dublin, going about unrestricted as to speed, and there was not a single accident of any kind in Dublin itself. If ever there was an object lesson it was in Ireland recently, where for over ten days in Dublin motor-cars ran about the streets and there was not a single accident of any kind. The hon. Member for St. Austell Division came much nearer the proper way to protect the public when he said that he considered that those who drove motor-cars should have some qualification. I was delighted to see the President of the Local Government Board give way upon that subject, for that is the curse of the whole matter. If you put a novice to drive a motor-car, that is a danger to the public on the high road. I suggest to the President of the Local Government Board that all these arguments which have been used, after all, come round to the one thing, that, if you have a man who understands his business, at all events, the safety of the public is not in great danger, or not in any greater danger than in the case of someone driving horses who knows nothing about them. I press upon the right hon. Gentleman the necessity of taking steps to see that drivers are fully qualified. I congratulate the hon. Member who is connected with the motor industry upon the speech he has made. I hope the House will pass this Bill, and I trust that those who are led away by prejudice like the hon. Member for Rugby, and who are great horse riders, will not press for a speed limit. I would like to know what the hon. Member would think if a speed limit were introduced in regard to riding with the hounds?

MR. JOHN STROYAN (Perthshire, W.) said he was strongly of opinion that the speed limit was absolutely necessary. They had heard a great deal from various speakers of the excellent roads on Salisbury Plain and their suitability for motor-car driving. They were told that these roads were level, that one could see a considerable distance ahead, and that it was fairly safe to drive at great speed on such roads. That might be true with regard to Salisbury Plain, but there was another side to the picture, as, for instance, with regard to the roads in his constituency of West Perthshire. That was perhaps one of the most favoured touring and motoring districts in Scotland, but the roads were not eminently suitable for motoring, because although they had excellent surfaces they were often on the side of a hill with a precipice on the other side. In some cases they were only twelve feet wide and in very few cases were they more than twenty feet in width, so that it would be dangerous to drive motor-cars on them at a high rate of speed. He held further that even on moderately good roads it was absolutely dangerous to the public to allow motor-cars to be driven at excessive rates of speed. It was dangerous to the traffic, to the carriages and horses, and to farm teams. In fact, agriculturists found them unmitigated nuisances, and were up in arms against them. It was not consistent with the safety of the public that they should be allowed to go at unlimited speed. They might just as well level up the railway tracks and use them as highways, because in that case there would be the benefit that they would know which portion of the road to avoid. He contended that if the roads throughout the country which were not intended for motoring were to be used for that purpose, they must be used only under such conditions as were consistent with the public safety.

SIR BRAMPTON GURDON (Norfolk, N.): I am quite in agreement with my hon. friend the Member for Barnstaple as to this Bill being an insufficient measure. I believe that the two most urgent points are the provision of adequate means of identification, which should be as perfect as can possibly be made, and the provision of adequate penalties. I feel so strongly that the provision in regard to identification should not be postponed, that I hesitate to do anything which would endanger the proviso in this Bill dealing with that question, passing into law. With regard to penalties, everybody will agree that at present they are quite useless. There was quite recently a case at Aldershot where a sergeant was knocked down and seriously injured by a motor-car, which was apparently being driven with the grossest carelessness, and the maximum penalty was only £10. It is necessary that we should be able to inflict the penalty of imprisonment, because I do not believe a money penalty is of the slightest use. I would almost consent in some cases to the punishment of flogging. The present speed limit is obviously useless, and I agree with my hon. and learned friend that the maximum speed is very liable to become the minimum. It has been said that a speed limit is necessary as a guide to the motorist. We do not want them to fancy that they can drive up to any limit; they must have the full responsibility upon themselves, and they should not go so fast as to endanger the safety of the public, although that speed may not be more than five or six miles per hour. It is impossible for any witness to tell how fast a motor-car is going, but you can easily form an opinion as to whether it is going too fast for the safety of the public. When I meet a motor-car I want to be able to swear whether it is going too fast for the safety of the public. You have not the slightest idea as to the actual speed at which a motor-car is running, but you can very fairly form an idea as to whether it is going too fast for the safety of the public. I earnestly hope the right hon. Gentlemen will leave it to the House to judge and not make it a Party question. I am quite impartial upon this subject, and if hon. Members do not get the Amendments they desire in Committee they can always vote against the Third Reading. Personally I am so anxious not to lose the two provisions to which I have alluded that I shall vote for the Second Reading of the Bill, and reserve to myself the right to vote against the Third Reading if I do not get the Amendments I desire inserted.

SIR FORTESCUE FLANNERY (Yorkshire, Shipley): I think that the question of penalties has much to do with the efficiency of this Bill. I agree with the various speakers who have stated that a fine is little or no discouragement to the owner of a motor-car. The phrase a "road hog" has been used, and it is one to remember. The "road hog" is the man who drives a motor-car without the least regard for the safety or comfort of others on the road, who will steer quite close to the restive horse or the nervous pedestrian to enjoy the sport. I say that to fine such a man is puerile; he should be sent to prison. Up to the present time there has been no power to send the "road hog" to prison. He is as much blamed by respectable motorists as by pedestrians or horse riders. This Bill is supposed, inside and outside of this House, to convey the power to enable the magistrates to send the "road hog" to prison. I desire the attention of my right hon. friend the President of the Local Government Board while I inquire whether or not the Bill does give that power. When I turn to Clause 9 I find that a person guilty of an offence under the Act for which no special penalty is provided may be sent to prison, and when I turn to Clause 7 I find that for certain excesses of speed over what is stated as fixed by the local authorities penalties may be inflicted. I submit, as a layman, simply that so far as the Bill goes it does not convey the power to a bench of magistrates to inflict imprisonment as an alternative to a fine. That is one of the superstitions concerning the Bill similar to that exploded by my hon. and learned friend on the question of a policeman having a new power to arrest a person guilty in his sight of furious driving. I desire to emphasise what has been said by the hon. Baronet as to the strong feeling that exists throughout the country regarding this question. I have the honour to represent one of the Divisions of the West Riding of Yorkshire. The County Council of the West Riding have received, from most of the districts under their care, petitions strongly advocating the provision of a speed limit in the Bill. I believe that is a feeling which is shared by every agricultural district in the country. Therefore I appeal as powerfully as I can to my right hon. friend, having regard to the strong feeling which has been expressed on both sides of the House this afternoon in favour of the imposition of a speed limit, to reconsider his view on this matter and to make at the earliest possible moment some announcement on behalf of the Government.

MR. HELME (Lancashire, Lancaster): As the motor-car has come to stay, it is necessary for this House to be very careful to make such arrangements as will not prevent the free use of this useful vehicle, while at the same time protecting the interests of the public. I rise, Sir, only for the purpose of presenting the opinion of certain of my constituents, who have asked me, as the hon. Member opposite has been asked, to endeavour, as far as may be in my power, to secure from the Government an alteration of this Bill, so that we may have the many advantages which are undoubtedly likely to accrue under it, provided they will consent to the imposition of a speed limit. I would earnestly ask the right hon. Gentleman to reconsider this matter, and relieve the House from the difficulty of having to reject the Bill, for that is the alternative which we should have to face. The experience of most men is that the travelling public, whether by foot or horse carriage, is very seriously interfered with by the reckless driving complained of. On the other hand, motorists have a right to the use of the roads as well as others. Therefore, without going into the general question at all, I would state that I have received a resolution from the Rural

District Council of Garstang "strongly protesting against any extension of the present speed limit of motor-cars," and yet approving of proposals met by the general provisions of the Bill. I received a letter this morning from a medical man in the same district, in which he says he has read Mr. Long's apology for the Bill. The speed limit must be the most important part of such a Bill. He says he has had unusual opportunities for ascertaining the opinion of the residents in the district, and he has not spoken to a single man who agrees with Mr. Long in this Bill. The only other matter I wish to put, is in regard to the position of the County Councils. I do claim on behalf of the County Councils that they should be trusted with the determination of the points alluded to, and not be subject to the control in these matters of the Local Government Board. I appeal to the Government to meet the expressed wish of the House in this matter, and adopt a limit of speed. I believe also there is a strong volume of public opinion outside this House which demands it, and is well worthy of consideration. Therefore I think, if the right hon. Gentleman would at once meet the general expression of opinion and allow this matter to be dealt with in Committee, this discussion might be rapidly brought to a close, and the business of the session not be unduly prolonged.

MR. WALTER LONG: I think it will be perhaps on the whole convenient that I should state now very briefly the view I have formed. I will deal with the one point on which the debate has centred this afternoon. There has been a general expression of approval of the greater part of the provisions of the Bill, and there has also been a practically unanimous declaration from all quarters in the House that legislation is urgently needed. Most things effected in this House are brought about by compromise. Hon. Gentlemen on both sides of the House, speaking from the point of view of those who favour and also those who are opposed to motor-cars, while finding great fault with one particular feature of the Bill, have endeavoured to meet the Government in a manner which I recognise, and to help them in dealing with this extremely difficult question. I attach full importance to the views of hon. Gentlemen on both sides of the question. I claim myself to be an impartial examiner into this question, having no predilections one way or the other. If I had any predilections I am afraid they would be thrown into the scale against motors; for, like my hon. friend the Member for Warwickshire, I have been associated with horses all my life. But I think I may honestly claim to be impartial in this matter. I believe firmly that the view of my hon. friend the Member for Warwickshire, which has been emphasised by the hon. Baronet opposite, is the right one—that a limit of speed forms at once an indication which tells the motorist what he can do. Whether or not the limit of speed is to be a very narrow one, it is obvious that the present speed cannot be maintained. I think common sense would tell us that there must be a speed somewhat in excess of it. I am afraid that the motorist will regard such a speed as that at which he may always go. [Cries of "No."] I am only expressing frankly the views I hold; I believe it will make it more difficult to secure convictions in some cases; but I fully recognise that my view, and the view I express on behalf of the Government, is not shared by the majority of those who have taken part in the debate, and who, I have no doubt, represent the majority of the people interested in this question. One or two suggestions have been made for the consideration of the Government. One is that the general question of the speed limit should be left an open question until we come to Committee, and the other is that some definite speed limit should be declared. I cannot accept the first suggestion, because I think it but an indifferent way out of the difficulty, and I cannot ask the Government to absolve themselves of responsibility in this particular case. There is a very grave responsibility to be attached to any alteration of the law which carries with it the risk of severe punishment to individuals. I am prepared, however, to make another suggestion to the House. I have stated what our views are. I will state what are the reasons that led us to form the conclusions at which we arrived.

I recognise the general feeling in the House, and that that feeling represents accurately the very strong feeling in the country. I assure the hon. Member for Warwick that it was quite unnecessary for him to reveal the secrets of his inner pockets and to show me all his correspondence. I doubt whether the letters he has received exceed or equal in warmth of expression the correspondence which I have myself received. I fully recognise, as I have said, that the feeling of the country is very strong indeed, and I hope that the debates in Parliament, as well as this legislation, will produce an alteration in the condition of things, because we all acknowledge that the motor-car has come to stay, and if properly employed will be useful for locomotion. I am prepared to make a suggestion to the House. I cannot make a definite proposal on the spur of the moment, because the question is surrounded by very considerable difficulties; but I recognise that there is a general desire that there should be some speed limit, and I am prepared, on behalf of the Government, to consider on the Committee stage whether a speed limit should be introduced, and, if so, what should be the maximum limit to which a motor-car should be allowed to go. But this on the understanding that there is to be added to the Bill, as a separate provision, that the penalties which carry with them imprisonment, must not be made applicable to that provision. There must be a distinction between an offence which consists in exceeding the recognised speed and the speed which adds to it some danger to the public. I point out to the House that there is nothing in the suggestion I have made which need lead hon. Gentlemen to think that this is not a real suggestion. We propose that there shall be two classes of offences—one, an offence committed when any particular speed is exceeded, and we propose that there shall be a graver offence, dealt with in a more serious manner, when that speed is great and to the risk of the public. We propose also, under the Bill without question as to the limit of speed at all, whether you go fast or slow, that if you are using your motor-car to the danger of the public, on a public road, then there shall be an offence punishable by heavier penalties.

*SIR WALTER FOSTER (Derbyshire, Ilkeston): I congratulate the right hon. Gentleman on the spirit of sweet reasonableness which he has shown in the course of the debate. He has, first of all, given us a valuable concession in reference to the qualification of the drivers. That is a most important concession. With reference to the speed limit, I myself have not much regard for it, and I never had. When the right hon. Gentleman's Department was dealing with road locomotives on a former occasion, I had very grave doubts as to putting on a ten or twelve mile limit, and likewise as to the provision that a flag should go before a road locomotive. I thought that these were restrictions of an obsolete kind and would be merely obstructive. As time passes I am sure we shall all find that this system of a time limit is also obsolete. While that is my personal opinion, I know that there is a very strong feeling in the House and outside about the matter, but I warn the right hon. Gentleman that there will be very great difficulty in fixing the limit. There is always this great danger, that if you fix a fairly high limit it increases rapid locomotion by inducing drivers to drive up to it, and that increases the danger to the public. On the other hand, if you put a limit at too low a rate you check invention, which this House ought never to do. There is another point in connection with a speed limit which I would urge the right hon. Gentleman to consider before the Committee stage of the Bill. Some hon. friends behind me appealed very strongly that this matter should be left to the local authorities rather than to the central authority in London, and that each County Council should fix its own limit. That would lead to great diversity of regulations in different parts of the country and great confusion in practice, and would require that every County Council should erect at its boundaries a sign-board giving notice of the speed limit allowed in that part of the county. Still, there is a good deal of feeling that members of the County Councils ought to be allowed to regulate the traffic in their own area and on their own roads. There is another argument which the right hon. Gentlemen ought to bear in mind, and that is as regards excessive speed in its bearing on the destruction of the roads. We all know that the greater the speed of motor-cars the greater is the dust and the greater is the suction made by the car, which draws out of all the crevices the dust which creates such a nuisance to those living on the roadside. That dust, moreover, leads to a large amount of danger and nuisance to those making use of the roads. Therefore the County Councils would be naturally opposed to a high rate of speed. However strongly we may personally feel on all these questions, we ought to be prepared in Committee to make concessions in order that this Bill may be passed. The feeling is universal in the country with reference to the danger of the rapid and monstrously reckless driving of some people who have been called by not too eulogistic terms in this debate. I rejoice that the right hon. Gentleman has made the penalties in the Bill as severe as he has done. I would have had them even more severe; for I believe that nothing short of imprisonment will stop the excessive speed at which some cars are driven. I do not think that the danger is in any degree so great as the public imagine, but there is a great amount of feeling in the country that demands the passage of this Bill. I hope that the passage of this measure will lessen public apprehension, and end in the safe development of a means of locomotion useful for commerce as well as pleasure.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): As this is a Bill which affects Ireland as well as Great Britain, I am very glad to say that the remarks which I intended to make will be different now, because of the statement of the right hon. Gentleman in charge of the Bill. I think the right hon. Gentleman is to be congratulated on the fact that he has, at the eleventh hour, by the attitude he has taken, secured the passage of the Bill which is desired by the people of England, Scotland, and Ireland. Otherwise, after the strong lead of the hon. Member for Westminster, the Bill, in all human probability, would never have become law this session. I have a confident belief—and I think I speak on behalf of the Irish Members—that with the Amendments suggested by the right hon. Gentleman the President of the Local Government Board, this Bill will pass into law to the intense satisfaction of the general public. I only say that I wish to goodness the Government were always as responsive to the expression of public opinion as in this case. I am certain that if a general election had taken place on this question of speed limit, the opponents of that provision would have been hopelessly defeated. An hon. Member below the Gangway said that there had not been very many fatal accidents in the streets of London. But that has been because the people in the streets have been obliged to fly for their lives. I happen to live facing one of the greatest thoroughfares in London, where thousands and thousands pass every hour; and I know what the feeling of the man in the street is. The people scatter and disperse in every direction whenever they see a motor-car coming along as if before a charge of cavalry. The people in the streets ought not to be called upon to fly to the pavements when a motor-car passes. There was one view expressed by an hon. Member, which I hope will never be realised viz., that the day was at hand when horses would completely disappear from our streets, and when every sturdy artisan would be found careering along to his work on a motor-bicycle. I say it reverently, "God forbid we should ever see such a day as that." I am not opposed to the motor industry; I have not the slightest objection to motors; but I do say that of all the forms of motoring the motor-bicycle is the most despicable. Some discussion has arisen in this country lately as to the physique of the people; but I am quite convinced that if the hope of the right hon. Gentleman were realised, and every citizen spent his time on, and got his life shaken out of him by a motor-bicycle, we would soon have the worst physique in the whole world. He congratulated the right hon. Gentleman for two reasons. In the first place, because a useful Bill would be passed, and secondly, because he could go home relieved of the necessity of remaining to divide the Committee on the point.

MR. SOARES said that having regard to the fact that they might look upon the right hon. Gentleman's promise in the nature of a pledge that he would fix a reasonable speed limit in Committee he would ask leave to withdraw his Motion. He thought the County Councils ought to have full power of regulating the speed on their own roads.

MR. MURRAY (Coventry) said he should like to have some further information regarding the sweet reasonableness with which the President of the Local Government Board had been credited. He agreed that the speed limit was a vital matter, and his reason for further debating the Bill was that they had hitherto considered it as a whole, and this concession entirely altered the conditions. He thought it bore very hardly on those motorists who were not very rich men. He sympathised with what the right hon. Gentleman had said with regard to motor-bicyclists, as he represented a constituency in which this industry had taken root, and which, in one city alone, gave occupation to 2,500 working-men. He should be failing in his duty if he did not attempt to protect their interests. This industry had produced last year, without counting motor-cars for the rich, small forms of cars to the number of 8,000. He thought that when they looked at the savage penalties introduced into this Bill, which might affect men of small means, they ought to hesitate in passing it. For extreme cases he did not think the penalties were too severe, but the penalties for working-men, who bought a motor-bicycle by instalments, which would be inflicted by magistrates who considered all motorists to be lunatics, opened a vista of considerable danger to a large section of the population. The users of motor-cars would not be frightened off the roads. They wished to use them without driving off other people. In his opinion they ought not to accept the withdrawal of the Motion without fully considering the effect it would have on the Bill, and he thought they ought to have some expression of opinion from those interested in the motor industry, whether under the new condition of affairs the House should permit the Motion to be withdrawn.

MR. SEELY (Lincoln) said he wished to appeal to the President of the Local Government Board and to the House generally to carefully think over the question of these very savage penalties which had been inserted in the Bill. They had that day heard that motors were intended as toys for the rich, but he would point out that motor-bicycles were used by men with weekly salaries of only £2 or £3. Only the other day a man in receipt of a weekly salary of £2 was under the present unreasonable law fined £5. He was riding at a quiet and reasonable speed with another cyclist who was not on a motor-cycle, and was stopped by a policeman, who would listen to nothing as to what the actual speed was, but insisted that they were exceeding the legal limit and summoned him, with the result that he was fined a sum in excess of a fortnight's income. That was the kind of case that caused the motorists to think the present law was unreasonable. It allowed a sentence of three months' imprisonment to be passed if in the opinion of the magistrate or policeman, which might or might not be right, the motorist was driving recklessly or negligently, and without regard to the nature, condition, or use of the highway and the amount of traffic that might be expected to be on the said highway. He thought that these penalties were very strong, although they had to a certain extent been accepted by a number of motorists, who were anxious to provide a remedy for the present state of affairs. He had the greatest sympathy with the hon. Member for Cornwall, who had mentioned a fact that had occurred to him. The same thing had happened to himself, when a motorist deliberately turned the car towards him and frightened his horse. But all that would be completely altered by the provision for registration, and in the future if any one behaved improperly they had the means of identifying him and having him punished. That would do away with the ill-feeling which had been caused by improper conduct on the part of certain motorists in the past. He would appeal to the right hon. Gentleman that if he was going to alter the Bill and put in a reasonable speed limit, he should at the same time leave out these savage penalties which were a relic of the mediæval old-fashioned times. Let them act on modern progressive and liberal ideas and inflict moderate penalties and a proper system of identification, rather than inflict savage penalties which were only fit for the old times when a man was hanged for stealing a sheep.

MR. LABOUCHERE (Northampton) said the motor-cars seen on the streets could only be likened to the cars of Juggernaut. The people had a perfect right to the use of the highway, and the House ought to take good care to see that the motor-cars should be as little danger to the wayfarer as possible. The hon. Member who had last addressed the House talked about the savage penalties that might be inflicted under the Bill, and instanced the penalty of three months' imprisonment, but hon. Members would remember that the offenders did not necessarily get that punishment, although the magistrate had the power to inflict it. The hon. Gentleman had also said they were going back to the mediæval times. That was just what they were not doing. In those good old times the gallant knight could gallop down the road throwing down honest citizens and no penalty at all was inflicted. He wanted some sort of punishment to be given that would prevent reckless people from endangering the lives of others on the high road, and therefore he hoped the President of the Local Government Board would not reduce the penalties. What had been done was that the right hon. Gentleman had said—"I am going to put in a speed limit. A rider may exceed that by mistake. If it is a mistake he shall only be fined, but if he injures any person or drives negligently where there is much traffic, and produces ill or havoc to those using the road, then he shall be liable to imprisonment." They heard a good deal of every working-man going about on his motor-car, but they knew that was not the sort of machine on which the working man as a rule would go to his work, for the reason that not only was the initial cost heavy, but there was the additional cost per hour of working whether by electricity or petroleum. He admired the Bill as it stood, and had a sound and great admiration for the right hon. Gentleman. They wanted a law by which persons could be prevented from upsetting others and then driving away without being recognised. The Bill had two great advantages. It insisted on the registration of the machine, and it also insisted on the registration of the driver. Even if the Bill went no further than that it would do good. But he thought that in the interests of the public it would be a mistake not to have a limit of speed. The right hon. Gentleman knew that if there was a strong opposition the Bill could not be passed this session, and he made certain concessions, and I think very fair concessions, and I hope the Bill will pass through a much better one than it was before, in consequence. In all these things it is not a question of politics; you may call them fads or principles or anything you like, but this is exactly one of those Bills on which, unless concessions are made, we should talk to extinction. The House of Lords, which generally passes a Bill in ten minutes, took three days; we probably in proportion would take three weeks. In this matter I am much in the position of the Prime Minister; I have no confirmed convictions. But there is just one point. I see there is to be a limit in towns of twelve miles an hour. [AN HON. MEMBER: No, ten.] Well ten. I think that is a deal too fast; I should have put it at six. Hon. Gentlemen may laugh, but the roads are made for all mankind and hon. Members know how they are troubled and how their nerves are shaken by this rapid locomotion. I am an old man, but if I walk in London I have to bound and skip about like a boy. I think six miles an hour is enough. But outside towns I think wherever there is an agglomeration of houses, boards should be put up in order to warn motorists and prevent motor-cars going fast through those places. It is not so much that there is much traffic, but there are a number of children who come to play in the road and the thing is dangerous to them. I hope the right hon. Gentleman will consider that in making these changes, and with these modifications the Bill will pass without much discussion.

MR. BUTCHER (York): I will not detain the House from the Division but for a few minutes, but there are two points I wish to mention regarding the concessions made by the right hon. Gentleman, to which I hope attention will be given. Firstly, we are going to have a speed limit. I hope it will be some moderate and reasonable one. I am not sure that the present limit of twelve miles an hour is not high enough, but I hope it will not exceed fifteen to twenty miles at most. (Cries of "Keep it twelve.") Secondly the right hon. Gentleman has indicated that the penalty for the offence of driving beyond the authorised limit will be a different penalty from that prescribed in Clause 1 for going at a reckless speed and dangerous driving. That is right, but I hope that the penalty for exceeding the authorised limit will not be an illusory one, as it is at present. Persons now habitually exceeded the limit, and paid the fine with the utmost satisfaction. They pay the fine of £5, and look upon it as part of the game. Those persons must be stopped, and I, for one, trust that the penalties for exceeding the limits will be adequate pecuniary penalties. I congratulate the right hon. Gentleman on the decision he has arrived at, which has given the utmost satisfaction to the House.

MR. SPEAR (Devonshire, Tavistock): It has been suggested by an hon. Member that the motor-car industry will be ruined by the imposition of a speed limit. I venture to say that, having regard to the strong feeling in the West of England against the abolition of the speed limit, the right hon. Gentleman, by the concession he has made, has rendered the greatest possible service to the motor-car industry. If the Bill had been passed without the speed limit there would have been such dissatisfaction that the industry would have suffered considerably. I rise on behalf of my constituents to thank the right hon. Gentleman for the concession he has made. They feel that the Bill, with the exception of the regulation as regards speed, is a very good one indeed, and so strong is their feeling against the abolition of the speed limit that they would rather have no Bill at all if that were taken away. I think the moderation shown by the right hon. Gentleman will produce a better feeling between motorists and the public, and that the public will recognise the right of motorists to use the roads, and that the motorists will also recognise that the people have a right to use them in a proper manner.

*MR. JOHN DEWAR (Inverness): I should like to call attention to one matter not touched upon to-night, and get some assurance that it would have the attention of the Government in this Bill. No power is taken under this Bill to prohibit motors from using certain roads altogether. There are many roads so constructed that no motors should be allowed to go upon them under any consideration. In my own constituency there were two accidents involving fourteen people in a week. They were not necessarily due to a high rate of speed or reckless driving, but were as likely as not to be due to the construction of the road, and to the motors coming suddenly round a corner and frightening horses which were coming the other way. I want the right hon. Gentleman to introduce in Committee a provision giving power to the County Councils, with the consent of the Local Government Board, to schedule certain roads, as is done, I understand, in France and Belgium.

MR. LOUIS SINCLAIR (Essex, Romford): Sir, I have listened to this debate with great interest, and it seems to me that the House of Commons are making a mistake in imagining that the present Bill is not a severe blow to the motor drivers. I consider the penalties in this Bill are so severe as to be almost savage in certain cases. I heard one hon. Member say he would like to imprison a man for exceeding the limit of speed, and the evidence in the case would be that of policemen and others, who had been put up to swear he was driving at an excess speed. I have never been fined, but I say, so far as the Bill is concerned, the question of a speed limit is in no way an objection. I think that a Bill might be brought in in order to deal with people who are ruining the motor-car industry, and if for that purpose the question of higher penalties were to arise to deal with men, who make themselves objectionable by shewing no consideration whatever to those who have a perfect right to use the high roads, such a Bill would receive the support of everybody. It has been said that if this Bill is not passed now we may have to submit to a very much more stringent Bill in the future. That only shows how we have to knuckle down to the ignorance of this House.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Main question put, and agreed to.

Bill read a second time, and committed for Friday.

PATENT OFFICE EXTENSION (RE-COMMITTED) BILL.

Considered in Committee.

(In the Committee.)

[MR. GRANT LAWSON (Yorkshire, N.R., Thirsk) in the chair.]

Clause 3.

MR. DALZIEL (Kirkcaldy Burghs) asked for an explanation of the Bill, and said it was usual for somebody to be present to answer Questions when a Bill of this kind went into Committee.

THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE TREASURY (Sir A. ACLAND-HOOD, Somersetshire, Wellington) said the Member in charge would be there directly.

MR. WHITLEY (Halifax) asked what was the amount involved in the proposals and how much had been expended.

MR. LLOYD GEORGE (Carnarvon Boroughs) said the Bill proposed to spend £110,000 on stuctural alterations and extensions, and he asked whether that involved any addition to the number of clerks, and whether it was intended to re-cast the whole office.

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.) asked why this matter had been dealt with in a separate Bill, instead of the required amount being included in the other Bill with which the House had had to deal.

MR. WHITLEY pointed out that the Bill involved considerable expenditure, and he presumed it was intended to provide for a prospective increase in the staff of the Patent Office, rendered necessary by the Act of last year. The Committee, however, had had no statement from the President of the Board of Trade as to the necessities of that increase or as to the progress under last year's Act. It was a curious thing for the House of Commons to be asked to vote money for an extension of accommodation before the head of the Department concerned had stated that an increase in the staff was required, and it certainly was not a procedure conducive to economy. He asked for what increase of staff the building was designed, and whether the Board of Trade had decided that an increase was urgently needed.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (MR. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central) said it was impossible to give the particulars asked for off-hand. There was not the slightest doubt that the Patent Office staff would require to be enormously increased as a consequence of the Act of last year. The provision of the Act mainly responsible was that which provided for an examination into whether or not patents had been anticipated. For that duty a large staff of specially trained men was necessary. He could not say how long it would be before the contemplated additions were completed, but they would probably take three years.

SIR WALTER FOSTER (Derbyshire, Ilkeston,) said that for years they had been complaining of the rapid increase of public expenditure for the ordinary administrative work of the nation, and this Bill was a typical example of how that increase was brought about. Here was a proposal to spend £110,000 on the building of offices, but when information was asked as to why the offices were required and the number of clerks to be put into them, no figures were forthcoming.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR said he could not give the figures as he did know the question would arise.

SIR WALTER FOSTER: That is an example of the slovenliness with which public business is conducted. It was the duty of the Minister in charge of the Bill to be prepared with all the details by which that Bill could be defended or advocated. Apparently this large expenditure was to be rendered necessary by duties which would gradually develop. In that case why could not the money be asked for and expended gradually as the need arose.

SIR JOHN GORST (Cambridge University) said the strictures on the Government were entirely out of place on the present occasion. This Bill did not ask for £110,000 at all; it simply enabled the commissioners to erect the buildings. The money would be provided by Parliament on the ordinary Votes, and the time to ask Questions, to criticise the number of clerks, and so forth, would be when those Votes were brought forward.

MR. CAWLEY (Lancashire, Prestwich) said that if the Board of Trade did its duty under the new Act a large number of clerks would have to be employed, and this £110,000 would not be wasted. Very large buildings would be necessary if the Act were to be properly carried out for the benefit of the trade of the country, and he should therefore support the Bill.

MR. VICTOR CAVENDISH (Derbyshire, W.) said the Bill was simply a measure for compulsorily acquiring land and the money power was provided in the Public Buildings Expenses Bill, which was discussed the other day. With regard to the objection that had been raised he would give a fuller explanation as to the number of clerks required in the Patent Office when the Bill came before the House. The Prime Minister had promised that at any rate one stage of the Bill should be taken before midnight in order that there might be an opportuunity of discussing it.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE: Will that be this session?

MR. VICTOR CAVENDISH: We hope so, certainly. It would then be possible to give a fuller explanation than he was able to give at present.

MR. WHITLEY asked whether the land could not be acquired by purchase under voluntary sale.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE, adverting to the provision that the Lands Clauses Consolidation Act should apply, contended that a limit ought to be placed on the amount paid for compulsory purchase. When the public was acquiring land of this character for public works, which would be for the benefit of the neighbourhood as a whole, it was unfair that they should have to pay frequently twice the real value of the land. That was practically what this clause meant. In Scotland the price paid was twice, if not three times, the real value. That has been admitted. What was the answer of the Lord Advocate? He said that if they proceeded under the Lands Clauses Consolidation Act they might have had to pay more. Consequently the Government are proceeding under an Act, which, according to a member of the Ministry, involves them paying more than in the case of an ordinary bargain. This clause started by saying they must fix the price according to the Lands Clauses Consolidation Act. There were no end of exceptions and special reservations, but not one of them really affected the merits of the Act itself, and the time had come when there should be special provision to protect the public against paying twice or three times the value for land. He supposed the Government knew what particular site they wanted for this purpose. No doubt they would have an arbitration, and having ascertained, not the real profits, but some conjecture as to the profits, then 10, 20 or 30 per cent. was added in respect of the mere fact that the land was being acquired compulsorily. Why not say that the Lands Clauses Consolidation Act should apply, and that nothing should be given for the mere fact of compulsorily acquiring the land. As a protest he proposed to divide the House against this clause.

Motion made and Question put, "That the clause stand part of the Bill."

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 187; Noes, 73. (Division List No. 210.)

AYES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Allhusen, Aug. Henry Eden
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Atkinson, Right Hon. John
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bailey, James (*Walworth*)
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (*Manch'r*
Balfour, Rt. Hn. G. W. (*Leeds*)
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bigwood, James
Bond, Edward
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Bousfield, William Robert
Brodrick, Rt. Hn. St. John
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Bull, William James
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Butcher, John George
Campbell, J. H. M. (*Dublin Univ,*
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cautley, Henry Strother
Cavendish, R. F. (*N. Lancs.*)
Cavendish, V. C. W. (*Derbysh.*
Cawley, Frederick
Cayzer, Sir Charles William

Sir John Gorst.

Cecil, Evelyn (*Aston Manor*)
Cecil, Lord Hugh (*Greenwich*)
Chamberlain, Rt Hon J (*Birm*
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J A (*Worc*
Chapman, Edward
Charrington, Spencer
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Charles Ready
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Cook, Sir Frederick Lucas
Corbett, A. Cameron (*Glasg.*)
Corbett, T. L. (*Down, North*)
Craig, Charles Curtis (*Antrim, S.*
Cranborne, Viscount
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Davenport, William Bromley
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dimsdale, Rt. Hon. Sir Jos. C.
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Dorington, Rt. Hon. Sir J. E.
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers
Duke, Henry Edward
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Dyke, Rt. Hon. Sir Wm. Hart
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Fellowes, Hn. Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson, Rt Hn. Sir J. (*Man'r*
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
Fitzroy, Hon. Edw. Algernon
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Flower, Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Philip S. (*Warwick, S. W*
Fyler, John Arthur
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Gibbs, Hn A. G. H (*City of Lond*
Godson, Sir Augustus Fredk.
Gordon, J. (*Londonderry, S.*)
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Goschen, Hon. Geo. Joachim
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Hain, Edward
Hall, Edward Marshall
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hamilton, Rt. Hn. Ld. G. (*Mid'x*
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Hatch, Ernest Frederick Geo.
Heath, Arthur H. (*Hanley*)
Heath, James (*Staffs., N. W.*)
Henderson, Sir A. (*Stafford, W.*)
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
Houston, Robert Paterson
Howard, J. (*Midd., Tottenham*
Johnstone, Heywood
Kemp, Lieut.-Colonel George
Kenyon, Hon. G. T. (*Denbigh*
Keswick, William
Law, Andrew Bonar (*Glasgow*
Lawrence, Sir Jos. (*Monm'th*)
Lawson, John Grant (*Yorks, N R*
Lee, A. H. (*Hants, Fareham*)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N. S.
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Rt. Hn. W. (*Bristol, S.*
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Francis William
Lowther, C. (*Cumb., Eskdale*)
Lowther, Rt. Hon. Jas. (*Kent*)
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas, Reginald J. (*Portsmouth*
Macdona, John Cumming
M'Arthur, Charles (*Liverpool*)
M'Killop, Jas. (*Stirlingshire*)
Majendie, James A. H.
Maxwell, W. J. H. (*Dumfriessh.*
Melville, Beresford Valentine
Milvain, Thomas
Montagu, Hon. J. Scott (*Hants.*
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Morgan, D. J. (*Walthamstow*)
Morrell, George Herbert
Morrison, James Archibald
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
Muntz, Sir Philip A.
Murray, Rt. Hn A. Graham (*Bute*
Murray, Charles J. (*Coventry*)
Myers, William Henry
Nolan, Col. John P. (*Galway, N*
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Palmer, Walter (*Salisbury*)
Percy, Earl
Pierpoint, Robert
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Walter R.
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edw.
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Rattigan, Sir William Henry
Reid, James (*Greenock*)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Renwick, George
Ritchie, Rt. Hon. C. Thomson
Robinson, Brooke
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Rutherford, John (*Lancashire*)
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Seely, Maj. J. E. B. (*Isle of Wight*
Sharpe, William Edward
Shaw-Stewart, M. H. (*Renfrew*)
Sinclair, Louis (*Romford*)
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, Abel H. (*Hertford, East*
Smith, Jas. Parker (*Lanarks.*)
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Hon. A. (*Ormskirk*)
Stanley, Edw. Jas. (*Somerset*)
Stanley, Lord (*Lancashire*)
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir John M.
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Stroyan, John
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Sturt, Hn. Humphry Napier
Talbot, Lord E. (*Chichester*)
Taylor, Austin (*East Toxteth*)
Thornton, Percy M.
Tollemache, Henry James
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Tritton, Charles Ernest
Valentia, Viscount
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt. Hon. Sir W. H.
Walton, J. Lawson (*Leeds, S.*
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Whiteley, H. (*Ashton-u.-Lyne*)
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wills, Sir Frederick
Wilson, John (*Falkirk*)
Wilson-Todd, Sir W. H. (*Yorks.*)
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (*Bath*
Worsley-Taylor, Hry. Wilson
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Asher, Alexander
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Bayley, Thomas (*Derbyshire*)
Bell, Richard
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burt, Thomas
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Causton, Richard Knight
Channing, Francis Allston
Cremer, William Randal
Crooks, William
Dalziel, James Henry
Delany, William
Dewar, John A. (*Inverness-sh.*)
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Dunn, Sir William
Elibank, Master of
Emmott, Alfred
Evans, Sir F. H. (*Maidstone*)
Foster, Sir Walter (*Derby Co.*
Grant, Corrie
Griffith, Ellis J.
Harwood, George
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-
Helme, Norval Watson
Henderson, Arthur (*Durham*)
Holland, Sir William Henry
Horniman, Frederick John
Humphreys-Owen, Arthur C.
Hutchinson, Dr. Charles Fredk.
Jacoby, James Alfred
Jones, Wm. (*Carnarvonshire*)
Kearley, Hudson E.
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (*Cornwall*)
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
M'Arthur, William (*Cornwall*
M'Laren, Sir Charles Benj
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Moss, Samuel
Murphy, John
Norman, Henry
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, P. J. (*Tipperary, N.*)

O'Mara, James
Partington, Oswald
Paulton, James Mellor
Perks, Robert William
Rea, Russell
Rickett, J. Compton
Roberts, John Bryn (*Eifion*)
Robson, William Snowdon
Runciman, Walter
Samuel, HerbertL. (*Cleveland*)
Shackleton, David James
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Soares, Ernest J.
Spencer, RtHn. C. R(*Northants*
Taylor, Theodore C. (*Radcliffe*
Toulmin, George
Ure, Alexander
Wallace, Robert
Weir, James Galloway
White, Luke (*York, E. R.*)
Whiteley, G. (*York, W. R.*)
Whitley, J. H. (*Halifax*)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Wilson, H. J. (*York, W. R.*)
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—
Mr. Lloyd - George and
Mr. Warner.

MR. CALDWELL (Lanarkshire, Mid): I beg to move that we now report Progress.

Motion made, and question "That the Chairman do report Progress, and ask leave to sit again" (*Mr. Caldwell*) put, and agreed to.

Committee report Progress: to sit again this evening.

EVENING SITTING.

FIFE ELECTRIC POWER BILL [LORDS] (BY ORDER).

Lords reason for disagreeing to one of the Commons' Amendments to the Bill, considered—

Resolved, That this House doth not insist upon the Amendment to which the Lords have disagreed.—(*Mr. Caldwell.*)

WOOD GREEN URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL BILL (BY ORDER).

Lords Amendments considered—

Lords Amendment to the Amendment.

"In page 26, line 31."

Agreed to.

Lords Amendment—

"In page 26, line 31, after the word 'make,' to insert the words 'Nothing in this section shall apply to milk in the possession of any railway company until its arrival at the station of destination.'"

The next Amendment read a second time.

MR. HEYWOOD JOHNSTONE (Sussex, Horsham) said he moved to disagree to the Lords' Amendment moved to this Bill, and he did it purely and simply because of his position as Chairman of the Committee to which the Bill was sent. He objected to the Amendment because, in the first place, it altered the form of a clause which had now been settled for some time and had become a precedent, and in the second place, because of the time and manner in which this alteration had been suggested, and in the third place he objected to it on point of substance, because he thought it was not desirable. As the Bill came before the Police and Sanitary Committee it contained a clause in a form now settled for many years past, and which, as it stood, authorised the medical officer of health, with a view to the purity of the milk supply, to take samples of milk for examination. The milk might also be examined outside the district of the authority if an order of the magistrate had been previously obtained. The Lords' Amendment proposed to limit that clause by the proviso that nothing in the section should apply to milk in the possession of any railway company until its arrival at the station of destination. The form of the original clause was settled four or five years ago after a great amount of cogitation, consultation, and association with the Local Government Board and the County Councils' Association, representing the producers of milk, and the clause in its present form had been granted time after time in Bills brought before the Police and Sanitary Committee during the past four or five sessions. He submitted that the precedent established for the last four years ought not now to be upset. This point, so far as he knew, had never been raised before. Sixteen Bills had been brought before the Police and Sanitary Committee this session, and on fourteen of those Bills which contained this clause railways appeared by counsel, yet in not one of those cases was the point raised by this Amendment, namely, that the railway company found any hardship in the clause in the form in which it was passed for so long, then raised. If there had been any hardship in it the point would have been raised long ago. The suggestion of the railway company in this instance was that they might be damaged if it was in the power of an inspector of the medical officer of health to take samples *in transitu.* He thought it might be safely assumed that the inspectors would act with moderation and good sense and would not hang up the traffic on a railway line while they took samples of milk from the trucks. He submitted that this Amendment ought not to be allowed unless they had some evidence that the clause had failed in its original form. This section was usually introduced into such Bills, and the limitation of a clause thus sanctioned by precedent had not been considered or discussed by the Lords, but had been introduced by consent of the local authority because their Bill would otherwise have been opposed by a railway company.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this House doth disagree with the Lords in the said Amendment."—(*Mr. Heywood Johnstone.*)

SIR FREDERICK BANBURY (Camberwell, Peckham) said he hoped the House would not disagree with the Lords' Amendment in this case. The real facts were that the Wood Green Urban District Council had obtained powers to sample milk in vans on railways, and the Great Northern Railway having had its attention called to the fact approached Lord Ribblesdale, and subsequently Lord Morley, and pointed out that they would be glad to give any assistance to the inspectors who were desirous of finding out whether milk had been adulterated, but while they were willing to give every facility to examine the milk on their platforms and in their stations they thought that in the interest of the public it would not be desirable to allow inspectors to stop milk expresses at Finsbury Park and other stations and thus cause delay, which was not in the interests of the public. The railway company would be glad to give every facility for the examination of milk, not only on its arrival at its station of destination, but also on the platform of the station of its departure, but they did not see why trains should be stopped at Wood Green or other stations while the inspector went into the milk van and took samples of milk. He thought also to advance the argument that because a clause was settled four years ago that that was a reason for appealing to the House of Commons for its being continued could not hold water. He hoped the hon. Member would withdraw his Motion.

MR. KEARLEY (Devonport) said that London had the worst reputation of any city in the kingdom for adulterated milk. In some districts the adulteration was as high as 35 and 40 per cent. He therefore supported the Amendment of the hon. Member for Horsham. This power to examine milk in transit dealt a most effective blow at adulteration. It was given in many Bills, and had not been objected to by the railway companies.

*THE CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEES (Mr. J. W. LOWTHER, Cumberland, Penrith) hoped the hon. Member for Peckham would not press his objection to the Motion. On the merits, however, he agreed with the hon. Baronet, because he could not imagine anything more objectionable and absurd than the examination of the milk on board the milk train with an express behind it. But this provision had been inserted in sixteen Bills in this session and in a great number in past sessions. Public attention having been called to the matter, he thought it was obvious that in any Bill of this character railway companies would take good care to bring their case before the Police and Sanitary Committee, and he had no doubt that due weight would be given to all the arguments brought forward on behalf of the railway companies. He thought it was undesirable to alter the model clause in this case, and for that reason he urged that it should be allowed to remain in the state in which it left this House.

Question put, and agreed to.

Subsequent Lords Amendments agreed to.

Committee appointed to draw up reasons to be assigned to the Lords for disagreeing to one of their Amendments to the Bill.

Committee nominated of—The Chairman of Ways and Means, Mr. Heywood Johnstone, Mr. Whitley, Mr. Luke White, and Sir Frederick Banbury. Three to form a quorum.

To withdraw immediately.—(*The Chairman of Ways and Means.*)

STANDING ORDERS.

Standing Order 135, relating to Private Business, read and amended, in lines 1 and 2, by inserting, after the words "in any street," the words "or road."

At end, by adding the words "and it shall be competent to the Referees on Private Bills to admit the Petitioners, being the owners, lessees, or occupiers of any house, shop, or warehouse having its access materially dependent on such street or road, and making the aforesaid allegations, to be heard against the Bill, if they think fit."—(*The Chairman of Ways and Means.*)

GLASGOW CORPORATION (POLICE) ORDER CONFIRMATION BILL [LORDS] (BY ORDER).

Read the third time, and passed, without Amendment.

LANARKSHIRE TRAMWAYS ORDER CONFIRMATION BILL [LORDS] (BY ORDER).

Considered; to be read the third time to-morrow.

GLASGOW CORPORATION TRAMWAYS ORDER CONFIRMATION BILL [LORDS] (BY ORDER).

Read a second time; to be considered to-morrow.

WOOD GREEN URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL BILL (BY ORDER).

Reasons for disagreeing to one of the Lords Amendments reported, and agreed to. To be communicated to the Lords.

SUGAR CONVENTION BILL.

(Considered in the Committee.)

(In the Committee.)

[MR. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith) in the Chair.]

Clause 1.

* MR. LEVY (Leicestershire, Loughborough) moved to leave out Sub-section (1). He objected to the Sub-section because it allowed a foreign permanent Commission, formed principally of trade rivals, to dictate to this country whether it should admit or prohibit sugar from certain countries, even perhaps from our own colonies. The Colonial Secretary said it was only a Commission of Inquiry, but he thought it was more than an Inquiry.

*THE CHAIRMAN said the hon. Member was not confining himself to the Amendment. It appeared to him that the only question the Amendment really raised was whether the Convention should be carried out by means of prohibition or by the imposition of a surtax or countervailing duty.

*MR. LEVY said the question appeared to him to be one of considerable importance. If they prohibited sugar in any large quantity it must necessarily increase the price and create a burden for the great majority of the people of this country. At the present time they had no reason adduced, except to help the West Indies, why they should prohibit sugar coming into this country. He thought he was therefore justified in moving the rejection of the Sub-section.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 1, line 14, leave out Sub-section (1)."—(*Mr. Levy.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out to the word 'is' in line 15, stand part of the clause."

*THE CHAIRMAN: The Question I have to put is that the words of the Sub-section down to line 15 stand part of the clause.

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.): Can you not put the Amendment so as to protect my Amendment?

*THE CHAIRMAN: All the Amendments down to the Amendment standing in the name of the hon. Member for Dundee in line 15, are out of order, because they are all contrary to the Convention. They suggest all sorts of conditions and stipulations which cannot be made.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar) asked whether they were to understand that they could not discuss the different clauses of the Bill because they carried out the stipulations of the Convention.

*THE CHAIRMAN: You may not suggest any alterations in the Convention. The Government have accepted the Convention, and this Bill is limited to the purpose of carrying out the Convention. It is not for the purpose of carrying out other proposals not contained in it.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON (Dundee) asked whether his Amendment, to insert at the beginning of line 14 the words "Subject to the obligations of existing treaties," was out of order. It seemed to him that all existing treaties were equally obligatory on the Government.

*THE CHAIRMAN: There is nothing in the Bill to carry that into effect. This Bill is for the purpose of giving effect to a particular Convention. We cannot consider the provisions of other conventions or treaties.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE (Carnarvon Boroughs) asked if it was not open to the House in accepting the Convention to accept it on terms.

*THE CHAIRMAN: This Bill does not propose to do that. It is limited to one narrow purpose—namely, to give effect to a particular Convention. Therefore the Committee cannot go outside that.

MR. LOUGH called attention to Article XII of the Convention, which laid it down that the fulfilment of the provisions was subject to the formalities established by the constitutional laws of each of the contracting States.

*THE CHAIRMAN did not think that left it open to the House of Commons to accept the Convention or not, because the Bill had received its Second Reading.

MR. ROBSON (South Shields) asked whether it was not in the competence of the Committee to say that any measure which the House assented to in order to confirm the act of the executive might be so far limited as not to interfere with existing treaties. Surely the House was entitled under this Bill to raise the question as to how far it affected the most-favoured-nation clause, and how it should be amended so as not to interfere with treaty engagements.

*THE CHAIRMAN: All these considerations seem to me to be outside the scope of the Bill, though not beyond the scope of the House. The House can do anything, of course. But the question is as between prohibition and the imposition of countervailing duties. This clause proposed total prohibition.

MR. LOUGH said that this was one of the most important points raised in the Bill. The Government had adopted the plan of prohibition, which no doubt would be sufficient, but he denied that it was judicious for the House to adopt such a drastic method of treatment. The Colonial Secretary had said that this Brussels Commission was to be a Commission of Inquiry. It was to be nothing of the kind; it was to be a permanent Commission, an autocratic body whose decision left no option for the Government. Thus the Committee was placed in a very difficult position by the difference between the statement of the Colonial Secretary and the terms of the Bill. It was not safe to prohibit importations from those countries against which a prohibition order might be issued because they sent us a small quantity of sugar in a particular year. Such a method of prohibition raised a large principle for consideration. If America, Argentina, or Chili sent only a small quantity of sugar we would prohibit it, and it would not inconvenience our merchants. But that would be a dangerous policy for this House to adopt. These countries might send us a great deal next year. There were four countries which had all been condemned by this permanent Committee. The first was Argentina, which, in 1900, sent out 217,000 cwts., and in 1902 806,000 cwts. In two years the imports from Argentina had quadrupled. Therefore, if we had prohibited on the figures of 1900 we should have placed the trade of this country in a very serious difficulty. It was not safe for the Government to assume that they could prohibit importations from those countries against which a prohibition order might be issued because they sent us a small quantity of sugar in a particular year. Such a method of prohibition raised a large principle for consideration. A very small quantity of imports was enough to regulate the price, and if we shut off these importations then the country which sent us the largest supply would raise its price accordingly. The whole policy of prohibition was a most dangerous one to adopt.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON said that to prevent the import of sugar into this country would be to raise the price of that commodity, and put our manufacturers in a worse position than now, compared with those of France and Germany. After that injury had been inflicted on the British manufacturers and consumer, the question was how you could alleviate the injury. The British Government having made up their minds to penalise the bounties, that penalisation ought to be in their own hands, and beyond the control of foreign countries, which were our rivals in commercial affairs. It was unfortunate, however, that this country should be in the hands entirely of a Commission on which we had only one vote, and our competitors and rivals had ten votes. The Colonial Secretary said the other night that every one of these foreign countries had only one vote. That was true, but after all, the interests of all the other Powers went one way, and our interests went another way, because they were producers and we were consumers; they were sellers and we were buyers. This Commission once created—and apparently they were not allowed to discuss, in Committee, whether it should be created or not—it was a most serious question whether we should allow it to dictate to us in regard to the countries whose sugar we should penalise or prohibit. At the present time, six countries, including Great Britain, had ratified the Convention. All the other countries—a considerable number of them, perhaps the majority, being sugar producing countries — were outside the Convention. Of the five other countries which had ratified the Convention only the sugar systems of Belgium and Germany had yet been passed by the Commission as satisfactory, and that only by a small majority. He understood that the British representative was in the minority. Therefore, at the present time, there were only two countries the importation of whose sugar we might not have to prohibit. And we might have to-morrow to prohibit imports of sugar from Austria-Hungary if the Commission reported against the system of the Dual Monarchy. The Colonial Secretary had said that if Austria-Hungary broke away, a new Convention would have to be held. That was not so, for Article X. said that in the event of one of the States denouncing the Convention and withdrawing from it, the other States should retain their right of also withdrawing. There was no question there in regard to a new Convention. His point was that we were putting ourselves in a most dangerous position. We would be called upon to prohibit sugar from other States at the beck and call of our foreign competitors, and we would not have the option of imposing countervailing duties. Therefore we should lose our sugar on the one hand, and our revenue on the other. He must say that the whole of this Convention was founded upon the most extraordinary piece of politico-economic folly which had come under his observation for many years. Under this new fiscal policy we were going to give up to our competitors £8,000,000 a year, and to put ourselves in a worse position with regard to Germany and other countries than we were ever in before; and all this in the name of free trade! He was sorry that the Government should have endeavoured to carry it through, and he believed that if this matter had not been turned into a Party question by the Government, they should never have been able to pass the Convention through the House of Commons.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central) said that the hon. Member seemed to have taken this opportunity to make a Second Reading speech, through which, however, he did not intend to follow him. There was only one question before the Committee, and that was whether the Government were to be empowered to carry out the Convention; and yet, after a quarter of an hour occupied by the hon. Member, he was as much in the dark as ever as to the policy which the hon. Member wished the Government to adopt.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON said that the point of his argument was that the Government ought to keep the matter in their own hands, and not place the country in the position of being dictated to by foreign Powers.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR said that that remark of the hon. Gentleman amply justified the criticism he had made. The statement of the hon. Member would go absolutely against the principle of the Convention. He did not know whether the hon. Member for Poplar meant to move an Amendment to that effect, but if he did, he would be ruled out of order, because he would remind the hon. Gentleman that that was not the question before the Committee. The only question before the Committee was whether power should be given to the Government to prohibit the importation of sugar from certain countries, and to impose countervailing duties. The hon. Member for West Islington took exception to the statement made by the Colonial Secretary the other night to the effect that the Government were not bound to prohibit. The Government were not bound to prohibit for two reasons. First of all, the special powers taken under the clause now being discussed would not necessarily be exercised. A distinction had to be drawn between the contracting Powers and the non-contracting Powers. If hon. Members would look at Article VII, they would see that the duty of the Commission was limited to finding and investigation. Did not that amply justify the description of the Colonial Secretary that this was a Court of Inquiry? It was only in regard to the non-contracting States that the findings of the Commission were binding on the parties to the Convention. If the permanent Commission found that any one of the contracting States did not bring its legislation into harmony with the Convention, or gave a bounty, they would have to report their decision to that effect; and in that case it would not carry an obligation either to countervail or prohibit sugar coming from a contracting State. What would occur under these circumstances, he presumed, would be the summoning of a new Conference. The case was clear enough in regard to the non-contracting States.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON asked if the right hon. Gentleman meant that Clause 1 did not apply to the contracting States at all.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR said that there was no obligation on this country to prohibit sugar coming from a contracting State, although that State might be giving a bounty on the manufacture and export of sugar. In the case of non-contracting States, the Commission had not merely to report whether such States gave a bounty, but, if they gave a bounty, it had got to report what the amount of the bounty was, and then, under Article 4, the contracting States would be bound either to propose countervailing duties or to prohibit. But, so far as regarded contracting States, there was no such obligation. He did not know whether the hon. Member who moved the Amendment would prefer that power should be given to the Government to impose countervailing duties rather than to prohibit sugar from bounty-giving States. That, at any rate, was not the opinion of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Monmouth, who, in November last, speaking for the Opposition, said—

> "Of course, nobody would have preferred countervailing duties to prohibition."

The Government believed that, in almost every case, prohibition was a policy preferable to the imposition of countervailing duties. At the same time, they recognised that there might be circumstances in which a countervailing duty would be preferable to prohibition, and they provided for that, and, although they did not take power in the Bill to impose such duties, they did, at the end of Sub-section 1, distinctly contemplate the possibility of such duties having to be imposed.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean) said it was clear from the speech of the right hon. Gentleman that the Government had not thought out the problem which was most likely of all to arise—namely, that one of the contracting Powers should withdraw from the Convention that had been come to. He wished to endorse what the hon. Member for Poplar said as to the majorities on these international Commissions. Those majorities were invariably hostile to British trade, and anxious, by acting together, to clip the wings of British trade in every part of the world. Let the Committee consider what was at stake in this proposal. They had it admitted by the Government that they at once penalised Russia and Argentina among other Powers. Every one knew that a large amount of sugar came from Russia, although it came in under other names, and the figures showed what the sugar trade with Argentina was. From a trading point of view, Argentina was more a colony than our own colonies. It was a country that lived entirely on British capital, and traded entirely with this country, and yet they were proposing here to exclude a large branch of our trade with Argentina.

MR. ROBSON said that in reference to the alternatives of prohibition and countervailing duties, the latter had this mitigating circumstance, that they would probably not exceed the amount of the bounty, and would accordingly leave some margin open to competition in case the Powers interested in the Convention raised the price of sugar to some dangerously high figure. On the other hand, if the policy were adopted of absolute prohibition, there was scarcely any figure to which the price might not be raised. It had been urged that the amount of sugar imported from the States which were not parties to this Convention was small. The United States had been given as an instance. The United States, however, had sent considerable quantities of sugar whenever the price had been unusually high in this country, and in similar circumstances they would again become substantial competitors. When prices rose this country would stand in need of the United States as a safeguard against an excessive rise. They ought to keep the United States in reserve for that purpose. Moreover, absolute prohibition of United States sugar would be a breach of the most-favoured-nation clause, unless it extended to every other country. The United States had, indeed, contended that they were at liberty to give concessions to other States, for particular considerations, which this country was not to share, but they had disputed that position, and the United States had hitherto yielded in part to that contention. But if this country resorted to prohibition what excuse could it make?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR asked what excuse the hon. Gentleman thought the United States would offer, if they brought against this country the charge that it was violating the most-favoured-nation clause, when it was pointed out that the United States themselves levied countervailing duties?

MR. ROBSON said that if the United States levied countervailing duties that did not prevent them also giving bounties. If the right hon. Gentleman thought that because the United States levied a countervailing duty it could never give a bounty and could never come under the operation of this clause, he did not know the way in which bounties were given. The direct plan of giving a bounty in the form of a positive gift of money to exporters was not the most insidious and frequent form. He predicted that they should find themselves coming into conflict with the United States. No one desired to see this result produced, though, as retaliation was apparently to become the favourite principle in the peaceful pursuit of commerce, the Government might possibly regard the prospect of commercial conflict with America without misgiving. If the country was to have a choice of evils, he thought that a countervailing duty, though a bad alternative, would be preferable to prohibition. Let them choose the lesser of the two evils at any rate.

MR. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.) said he had listened in vain for arguments by the President of the Board of Trade to show why prohibition was better than countervailing duties. In the debate on the Second Reading the right hon. Gentleman said prohibition was better, because it would be a rather strong thing to impose countervailing duties by Order in Council. But if that power were reserved to the Government, why not indulge in it. He could not understand why the Government should have preferred the policy of prohibition to the policy of countervailing duties. It seemed to him that whichever way one looked at it, the one they looked at seemed to be the worst and he supposed that the Government in its difficulty took the policy which would give the least trouble. His hon. friend had suggested a reason for countervailing duties—viz., that they could get some revenue from them, whilst prohibition would yield no revenue at all and at the same time would diminish their sources of supply. Really the further one went into this matter the darker it became, and when he heard of the difficulties raised with regard to the different countries and the unsatisfying replies received from them on the questions put to them, he thought they were legislating in the dark. They did not know what effect it would have upon other countries—upon Chili for instance. Even the Commission did not know what the effect would be. What were they going to do with regard to Chili or the Philippine Islands, which were becoming great sugar producers? It seemed that they were taking the very steps which it was least reasonable to take. They were going to exclude the sugar of the one country, Argentina, of all sugar-producing countries that was in closest commercial connection with ourselves, where the largest part of the trade was done in British vessels, and from which, therefore, we had the greatest likelihood of obtaining large cargoes of sugar. And yet at the very same moment we were beginning to threaten foreign Powers with, and asking this country to enter upon, a general war of retaliation against them. We were submitting ourselves to an international Commission that was likely to give every decision against us.

Mr. LLOYD-GEORGE said he understood the President of the Board of Trade to tell them that as far as the non-contracting Powers were concerned, we were bound to prohibit or to impose countervailing duties at the dictation of this European body, while in regard to the contracting Powers, if they, by giving bounties, broke the Convention, it would be necessary to summon another Conference before taking action. That was a very serious position for this country to be in. What did it mean? The price of sugar was very largely regulated by outside bodies, and as a result of the action of the Government our rivals would have the whole thing in their hands. The fact was that in regard to this Convention this country had just walked into a trap, and had not the satisfaction even of a nibble at the cheese. The whole thing had been given away. Never was a sillier bargain entered into by a business country. With regard to the choice between prohibition and countervailing duties he was reminded of the Irishman who, when asked by a tourist which was the better of two hotels, said it did not matter which his honour went, to for he would be sure to wish that he had gone to the other. We had entered into a great conspiracy to rob ourselves, and to hand all the swag over to others. We were prohibiting cheap sugar for the benefit of the very conspirators who had led us into the trap. Prohibition was an insult. We were very tender of our own susceptibilities; no country was more susceptible than we were, and the Colonial Secretary made use, for electioneering purposes, of the slightest use of words against us made by Germany. He repeated that prohibition was an insult; for the goods against which it was directed were put on the level of diseased cattle and obscene literature. And whom were we insulting? Our one ally, Japan. Germany had dominated the situation. We were quarrelling with neutral markets in the interests of the one country from which the Government declared that they would not "take it lying down." Why, they were taking it crawling from Germany. As to the price of sugar, that, of course, largely depended on the state of the market in the country of production. Our imports from Argentina were rapidly increasing, and it would not matter how high the prices went up in Europe so long as we had that source to fall back upon. The whole position was ridiculous, and he was surprised that the Government should submit to it.

*MR. MOULTON (Cornwall, Launceston) said he wished to point out the absurdity of the House of Commons solemnly arranging how His Majesty may do acts amounting almost to acts of war against our best friends simply because they wanted to make sugar cheap in England. He was unable to look upon it seriously. The thing was too ridiculous to last. It was quite fair to treat it with comparative cheerfulness, because it was so ludicrous. According to the Convention, as soon as the Commission decided that any country was giving bounties, directly or indirectly, for production or export, then we were to prohibit the entrance of sugar from that country. But the definition of a bounty in the Convention covered very minute matters. For instance, we were remitting the duty on molasses used for feeding cattle. That was an indirect bounty, and it might happen that if another country were to follow our example in regard to molasses we might find ourselves called upon to prohibit the importation of sugar from that country. Again, supposing one of the contracting Powers put a premium on the manufacture of chocolate, the absolute prohibition of the whole of the sugar coming from that country would immediately follow. England was the only country which had either taken it thus seriously or was stupid enough to fall into such a pit. The other nations put forward countervailing duties. They could put a countervailing duty upon molasses used for cattle food without a serious disturbance of the trade of the world. But were the Government forgetting that the rules of the Convention were so minute that it had solemnly adopted the almost hostile punishment of complete prohibition for all infractions of the Convention. Countervailing duties were inquisitional and contemptible, but they were better than the clumsy legislation which made the final punishment of prohibition follow the smallest infraction. He trusted that Members on both sides, seeing what a serious thing they were committing themselves to, seeing that they were going to say to the United States and Argentina "we will prohibit totally the importation of goods which you make and may want to sell in our markets," would at all events say to the Government "Give us a Bill which more or less carries out the policy of the Convention as it is understood by sensible people, and do not commit us to this blundering absurdity of complete prohibition for an infraction of such rules as the Convention has established."

MR. BOUSFIELD (Hackney, N.) said hon. Gentlemen on the opposite side appeared to proceed on the supposition that the remedy provided under this clause was prohibition, although two distinct alternatives were provided. [OPPOSITION cries of "No."] It was true the settlement of this matter might arise at a time when it would be difficult to obtain the assent of Parliament to the alternative of countervailing duties, and he did not understand why the Government did not take power to lay their hands at once on either alternative. The only reason which the President of the Board of Trade had urged against it appeared to have been based on the authority of the right hon. Gentleman the Member for West Monmouthshire, but in his opinion that was not sufficient. A very slight alteration of the clause would enable the Government to have the alternative of countervailing duties to prohibition. In theory, however, it was in the clause. Was it too late to consider that suggestion?

MR. LAWSON WALTON (Leeds, S.) said that when one considered the serious character of any proposal involving total prohibition without regard to the amount of the bounty or to the value of the imports, one could understand the fortitude of the hon and learned Member for Hackney giving way. Under this sub-section, although the bounty might be trivial in amount, the penalty was the total prohibition of the import. This applied not only to sugar but to all sweetened products—biscuits, condensed milk, preserves, chocolate, and, in fact, every commodity constituting an article of food into which sugar entered. As the hon. and learned Member had pointed out, this was a grossly illogical clause, and the common-sense view of the situation was to fight a trifling bounty by means of a countervailing duty, and not by means of this savage and extreme penalty, by which we should simply punish ourselves. The right hon. Gentleman by his argument had completely condemned the framework of the clause, for he had shown that it was not only illogical in substance, but that as to one portion it was absolutely meaningless He had stated that under this clause the Government had no power to prohibit the imports from any signatory at all, however gross its violation of the terms of the Convention might be. If that was the case, why had not the clause been so framed? As the clause was now drafted, the prohibition extended to all foreign States; there was no discrimination between signatory and non-signatory Powers. He appealed to his hon. and learned friends on the other side to say a word against the last sentence of this provision. The right hon. Gentleman, who was not a lawyer, and whose knowledge of constitutional doctrine was not derived from a direct source, had stated that by this last clause in the section he was reserving power to the Government at some future time to propose to Parliament, instead of this policy of prohibition, a policy of countervailing duties. Who had ever heard of a statutory reservation of power to propose legislation? It was open to the Government to propose any legislation; there was no limit to the power of Parliament to enact a law on any subject, to accomplish any object, and in any form; therefore this provision was absolutely meaningless and unconstitutional. The matter ought to be dealt with on some logical basis. The policy of the Government was either countervailing duties or prohibition, or else it was reservation of power to adopt an alternative policy. Why did they not enact definitely the policy they intended to pursue? He submitted that to frame a clause in this way was to reduce an Act of Parliament to a political speech, and to substitute for the clear language of a statute the vague and meaningless phraseology of a Government Department which had not made up its mind as to the policy it would adopt. With regard to the most-favoured-nation clause, it seemed quite possible that the language of treaties would have to be construed in reference to the fiscal system in existence at the time the treaty was signed, that the most-favoured-nation clause ought to be construed without reference to bounty-fed exports, and that the Government were entitled to discriminate against a nation which fed its exports by means of bounties. That might be held. But what he wished to point out was that the meaning of the most-favoured-nation clause was immaterial, because if countervailing duties infringed it, prohibition must *a fortiori* infringe it, and that therefore if the United States were entitled to complain against countervailing duties they would have an infinitely stronger ground of complaint against prohibition. He should vote for the Amendment in order that the clause in its present illogical form might be struck out. If the right hon. Gentleman asked to strike out the clause in order to insert prohibition, he would be disposed to work for the clause, but in its present form it was impossible to say whether it meant countervailing duties or prohibition, or, in fact, whether it meant anything at all.

MR. SHACKLETON (Lancashire, Clitheroe) desired to correct a statement made on the Second Reading to the effect that the policy of this Bill was supported by the working people of the country. On that occasion a circular was quoted giving fifty separate societies which had passed resolutions in favour of the abolition of the bounty system.

* THE CHAIRMAN said the point to which the hon. Member was referring was hardly relevant to the Amendment before the Committee.

MR. SHACKLETON said he desired to show that the statement that the working people of the country were in favour of this clause was altogether erroneous.

* THE CHAIRMAN said that that did not seem to be relevant to the argument, viz., that it was more desirable to impose countervailing duties than to enforce prohibition. If the hon. Member could add anything on that point the Committee would be glad to hear him, but to correct statements made on the Second Reading would not be relevant.

MR. BRYN ROBERTS (Carnarvonshire, Eifion) pointed out that the Amendment was to omit the clause.

*THE CHAIRMAN said that that was not so. The Amendment was to omit Sub-section (1), which dealt with a particular point.

Mr. SHACKLETON thought he could bring in his point on the question as between countervailing duties and prohibition. If the people were in favour of the Bill as drawn they would be in favour of prohibition, but he contended that they were not in favour of the Bill. The circular which had been quoted, although it was dated 1903, was really sent out in 1888, or fifteen years ago, and it was now put forward as an expression of the opinion of the working people in regard to this particular Bill. It was a most absurd contention, and certainly not a fair way of stating a case as between countervailing duties and prohibition. He was against the Bill entirely, but, the principle having been accepted, he, as one who believed in accepting the lesser of two evils preferred to vote for countervailing duties. Such a policy would not lessen the supply; it would bring in a certain amount of revenue, and the price of sugar would not be increased to so large an extent as by prohibition.

Mr. KEARLEY (Devonport) said that as there was no disposition on the part of the Government to reply to the many forcible arguments which had been put forward, he would throw a fly in the shape of a few figures. There seemed to be a general impression on the part of supporters of the Government that the countries outside the Convention were small producers of sugar. But what were the facts? At present we had access to the markets of the world, representing 10,250,000 tons of sugar annually. After 1st September we should be confined to countries producing only 5,000,000 tons, and the Committee would realise what that meant. The Government were actually proposing to exclude our merchants, buyers, and consumers—aye, and our ships—from the privilege of trading with the greater part of the sugar producers of the world. That was a most serious step to take, and one which could not fail to be hurtful to our interests. When one considered that we received no benefit from the Convention, and that this country had, in fact, been made the victim of the confidence trick by continental Powers, he thought the least the Committee had a right to expect was that the Government would at any rate state what their case really was and what they expected to get out of this policy.

*Mr. CAWLEY (Lancashire, Prestwich) said the question ought to be considered very carefully, because by this prohibition they were going to allow certain combinations on the Continent to fix the price of sugar and raise it to any degree they liked. If they had countervailing duties instead of prohibition that would not be possible, because when people combined they were able to raise their prices to what extent they liked only when there was no outside competition. By this Convention the Government were going to prohibit outside competition with these people, who were likely, if they had not already done so, to join themselves together in a huge cartel. They could not do that if certain other countries were able to deliver sugar into this country even against countervailing duties. Therefore he thought that it was entirely wrong that they should not be allowed to impose countervailing duties instead of total prohibition. It seemed to him that the Government were taking every precaution they possibly could to raise the price of sugar, but whether the consumers would be grateful to them for it he did not know. He could not understand how any Member could vote for this proposal.

Mr. THEODORE TAYLOR (Lancashire, Radcliffe) said there were one or two points in connection with this subsection which it was now proposed to delete which had not been sufficiently touched upon, such, for instance, as the meaning of the term, "direct or indirect bounties." Under the head of indirect bounties they might surely include preferential railway rates in other countries, and the remission of rates and taxation. In many countries, particularly in new countries, in order to encourage a particular industry the local authorities allowed certain remissions of rates for a considerable period. Under the terms of this clause, it seemed to him that such remissions of rates, although local in their application, would be regarded as indirect bounties.

*THE CHAIRMAN said the hon. Member would not be entitled to go into the meaning of the phrase on this Amendment.

MR. THEODORE TAYLOR pointed out that the words were contained in the portion that it was proposed to delete.

*THE CHAIRMAN said that that was so, but the question was not raised by the Amendment.

MR. LOUGH asked how the words "direct or indirect" were to be defined, as they were not defined in the Bill.

*THE CHAIRMAN said they were taken from the Convention.

MR. LOUGH asked whether in that case the Convention ought not to be embodied in the Bill.

*THE CHAIRMAN said he could not argue again the point he argued two hours previously; the hon. Member must accept the ruling he then gave.

MR. THEODORE TAYLOR said that on the point as between countervailing duties imposed by Parliament, and prohibition imposed by Order in Council, it seemed to him to be a very good reason for preferring countervailing duties that they were under the control of Parliament rather than of Orders in Council. It seemed to him that that was a reason why the House of Commons should support countervailing duties rather than prohibition. It was also a great advantage that while we were thrusting back the benefit into the pockets of foreign finance ministers we should also be putting some duty into the pocket of our own Chancellor of the Exchequer, if we adopted countervailing duties. It was not a question of whether or not they approved of bounties. The question was as to the best way under this Bill of dealing with bounties. He was one of those who strongly objected to countervailing duties, because they were continually varying. The bounty in the country against which we were countervailing might be altered. On the other hand, it was a very great advantage to be able to put some money into the pocket of our own Chancellor of the Exchequer, and, as had been very powerfully urged, we should be reserving to ourselves a very much larger area of the world's competition, because it was not a light question that the price of sugar should remain not artificially cheap, but that it should possibly be made artificially dear. It was not the intention of the Government that there should be an artificial dearness, but under this Bill that was quite possible. This Permanent Commission consisted of ten or eleven Powers in which they had only one Vote, but one of the competing countries—Austria-Hungary—had two Votes. The Commission represented countries whose customer we were, and if he wanted to restore natural competition in a business, he would not have as a Permanent Commission, a Commission consisting of the people who sold goods to him. The Commission consisted of Powers who had no doubt seen with envy and dissatisfaction that England had created a world-wide trade on the strength of cheap sugar. The point he wished to impress upon the House was, that in their desire to make sugar dearer, to conform to natural conditions, the Government were making the mistake of producing the opposite state of things, and putting it into the power of our rivals to make sugar artificially dear instead of artificially cheap. It was because he preferred artificial cheapness to artificial dearness that he supported the Amendment.

MR. GUEST (Plymouth) said he was one of those who had the profoundest dislike to the policy of the Sugar Convention, because it seemed to him to raise the cost of living in this country without any adequate advantage. But with others on the Ministerial side, having made their protest, as they did, in voting against the Second Reading, they felt that, as the House had given its sanction to the policy, they ought to support the Government in giving effect to it. He desired to ask the President of the Board of Trade to explain to those who were not so well up in the details, why it was that he preferred the policy of prohibition to the policy of countervailing duties. Take, for instance, the case of America. Why was it better in regard to America to adopt prohibition rather than countervailing duties? The introduction of American sugar, it was said, was simply a matter of price, and if the price of sugar rose, it was indubitable that American sugar would find its way into the English market. There was another instance, and that was the case of Argentina. They did a great deal of business and general trade with the people of Argentina, and he was sure his right hon. friend would appreciate the importance of freights. It might in some circumstances pay the producers of sugar to pay the countervailing duty, and bring the sugar over rather than send an empty ship over without freight. There were many things which they could do if they were willing to pay the compensation or fine which their action involved. He understood that the avowed object of this Sugar Convention was to increase the area of sugar-producing countries from which this country might ultimately draw its sugar supplies. The effect of this prohibition would be to prevent this country getting sugar from half the sugar-producing areas of the world. Again, more than half the sugar was produced under conditions which would lay it open to absolute prohibition, and consequently this proposal seemed, on the face of it, a somewhat contradictory state of things. He appealed to his right hon. friend to explain why he had been unable to accept the advice offered by the hon. and learned Member sitting below him, that he should take power under this Bill to have either prohibition or countervailing duties.

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR said the argument in favour of prohibition was its extreme simplicity. If, indeed, there were any reasonable probability that a very large portion of the available supplies of sugar was likely to be entirely cut off from this country by prohibition, in such case undoubtedly countervailing duties would be preferable. But he saw no probability of that whatever. When he did see any such probability he should be perfectly ready to consider whether countervailing duties should not be applied, but he thought it would be better that Parliament should be consulted before taking such a step.

Mr. URE (Linlithgowshire) said the explanation which had just been given them was quite inconsistent with the views put forward by the Government in November last. He had read carefully the speeches made upon that occasion, and he found a great many arguments offered in favour of countervailing duties, but none in favour of absolute prohibition. If there was an explanation, he supposed the English language was capable of conveying it. Hon. Members had been left to conjecture a good deal as to the reason for this proposal. He would offer one reason which, to his mind, was conclusive. He had been examining Clause 4 of the Convention, and he thought the real answer would be found there. That clause laid down a rule for calculating the countervailing duties, and the Committee would find that it was not too strong language to say that it was absolutely idiotic. The real reason why the Government had adopted prohibition was that they had found that in Clause 4 they had been hoaxed by the high contracting parties. Those high contracting parties were allowed to retain their sur-tax, and that, in the opinion of all who had really considered the question, knocked the bottom out of the whole scheme. Notice how countervailing duties were to be calculated in order to meet the sur-tax. A sur-tax was the difference between the excess of the Customs. Was the countervailing duty to be equivalent to the bounty? Nothing of the kind. They had to deduct six francs, and half of the remainder in order to calculate the countervailing duty, so that this proposal was futile and absurd. If the sur-tax was twenty francs they had to deduct six and that left fourteen. By halving this they got to seven, and therefore they had a countervailing duty of seven francs to meet a sur-tax of twenty francs. The thing was preposterous and the Government had been hoaxed. If that was not the real reason he should like to have a frank statement upon this point from the right hon. Gentleman, so that they might know exactly where they were.

Lieut.-Colonel GEORGE KEMP (Lancashire, Heywood) said he was one of those who had opposed the Second Reading of this Bill, but as the House had given its opinion in favour of the principles of the measure, he should not offer any further opposition. He was, however, still in the dark with regard to this question of countervailing duties and prohibition. He wished to know whether it would not be possible in this Bill to have the option either of countervailing duties or prohibition. The right hon. Gentleman had said that it might be necessary to have countervailing duties, but if he admitted that possibility why did he not make provision for it in this Bill?

MR. RUNCIMAN (Dewsbury) said that reference had been made to the effect which prohibition was likely to have, not on the producers alone but upon those who undertook the carrying of sugar. Prohibition was not a matter of simplicity, for it might land them into commercial difficulties which he was perfectly sure the President of the Board of Trade had not foreseen. Take the case of a vessel that went out to the River Plate with a cargo of coals. That vessel might have chartering engagements to carry sugar to the United Kingdom A prohibition order might be issued, and when that vessel arrived in the Thames the captain might be informed that prohibition had been issued against Argentine sugar, and he might be requested to go down to the Nore lightship and throw his cargo overboard. Could anything be more preposterous than that? The only other alternative was to ask that captain to cruise round Europe in the hope of finding a market for the sugar, which of course meant absolute ruin. The Parliamentary Secretary was of the opinion that longer voyages for sugar cargoes would be a great advantage to the shipping trade of Great Britain, but by this subsection they diminished the chances of these longer voyages. As a matter of fact, wherever one looked at this question from the point of view of the carrying trade, total prohibition was absolutely impossible.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 154; Noes, 86. (Division List No. 211.)

AYES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Allhusen, Aug. Henry Eden
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arkwright, John Stanhope
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Atkinson, Right Hon. John
Bailey, James (*Walworth*)
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (*Man'r*)
Balfour, Rt. Hn. G. W. (*Leeds*
Balfour, Kenneth R. (*Christch*
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bigwood, James
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith-
Bousfield, William Robert
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Bull, William James
Butcher, John George
Campbell, J. H. M. (*Dublin Univ*
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cautley, Henry Strother
Cavendish, R. F. (*N. Lancs.*)
Cavendish, V. C. W. (*Derbyshire*
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Cecil, Evelyn (*Aston Manor*)
Chamberlain, Rt Hon J (*Birm*
Chamberlain, Rt. HnJ. A (*Worc*
Chapman, Edward
Charrington, Spencer
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hn. Thos. H. A. E.
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, SirJohnCharlesReady
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Corbett, A. Cameron (*Glasgow*)
Corbett, T. L. (*Down, North*)
Craig, CharlesCurtis (*AntrimS.*
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Crossley, Sir Savile
Davenport, William Bromley-
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dimsdale, Rt. Hon. Sir Jos. C.
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Faber, E. B. (*Hants, W.*)
Faber, George Denison (*York*)
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Ed.
Fergusson, Rt Hn. Sir J. (*Man'r*
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Fitzroy, Hon. Edward Algernon
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Forster, Henry William
Foster, PhilipS. (*Warwick, S. W*
Fyler, John Arthur
Galloway, William Johnson
Godson, Sir Augustus Fredk.
Gordon, J. (*Londonderry, S.*)
Gore, HnG. R. C. Ormsby-(*Salop*
Goschen, Hon. Geo. Joachim
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Greene, W. Raymond (*Cambs*
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Hall, Edward Marshall
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hamilton, RtHnLordG (*Midd'x*
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, Arthur H. (*Hanley*)
Heath, James (*Staffords. N. W.*
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
Hogg, Lindsay
Jameson, Major J. Eustace
Johnstone, Heywood
Keswick, William
Law, Andrew Bonar (*Glasgow*
Lawson, JohnGrant (*Yorks. N R*
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, FrederickN.S.
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (*Bristol, S*
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Francis William
Lowther, C. (*Cumb. Eskdale*)
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas, Reg'ld J. (*Portsmouth*)
Macdona, John Cumming
Majendie, James A. H.
Maxwell, W. J. H. (*Dumfriessh.*
Milvain, Thomas
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
Montagu, G. (*Huntingdon*)
Montagu, Hon. J. Scott (*Hants.*
Morgan, D. J. (*Walthamstow*)
Morrell, George Herbert
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
Murray, RtHnA. Graham (*Bute*

Murray, Chas. J. (*Coventry*)
Murray, Col William (*Bath*)
Myers, William Henry
Nicholson, William Graham
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Palmer, Walter (*Salisbury*)
Percy, Earl
Pierpoint, Robert
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Reid, James (*Greenock*)
Remnant, Jas. Farquharson
Renshaw, Sir Charles Bine
Renwick, George
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. C. Thomson
Roberts, Samuel (*Sheffield*)
Robertson, Herbert (*Hackney*)
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Rutherford, John (*Lancashire*)
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Shaw-Stewart, M. H. (*Renfrew*
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, James Parker (*Lanarks.*
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (*Stran d*
Spear, John Ward)
Stanley, Hon. A. (*Ormskirk*)
Stanley, Lord (*Lancs.*)
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
Talbot, Lord E. (*Chichester*)
Talbot, Rt. Hn. J. G. (*Oxf'd Univ*
Taylor, Austin (*East Toxteth*)
Thornton, Percy M.
Tollemache, Henry James
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Ed. M.
Valentia, Viscount
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt. Hon. Sir Wm. H.
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Webb, Col. William George
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wilson-Todd, Sir W. H. (*Yorks.*
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (*Bath*
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Asher, Alexander
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Bayley, Thomas (*Derbyshire*)
Bell, Richard
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Brigg, John
Bryce, Right Hon. James
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Causton, Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Channing, Francis Allston
Cremer, William Randal
Crooks, William
Dalziel, James Henry
Dewar, John A. (*Inverness-sh.*
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (*Lanark*)
Elibank, Master of
Emmott, Alfred
Evans, Sir F. H. (*Maidstone*)
Foster, Sir Walter (*Derby Co.*
Griffith, Ellis J.
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Harmsworth, R. Leicester
Harwood, George
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Chas. Seale-Hayter, Rt Hon Sir Arthur D.
Helme, Norval Watson
Holland, Sir William Henry
Humphreys-Owen, Arthur C.
Hutton, Alfred E. (*Morley*)
Jacoby, James Alfred
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kemp, George
Kilbride, Denis
Labouchere, Henry
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (*Cornwall*)
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, David
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
M'Laren, Sir Charles Benj.
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Moss, Samuel
Moulton, John Fletcher
Murphy, John
Norman, Henry
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, P. J. (*Tipperary, N.*)
Partington, Oswald
Paulton, James Mellor
Price, Robert John
Priestley, Arthur
Rea, Russell
Rickett, J. Compton
Rigg, Richard
Roberts, John Bryn (*Eifion*)
Robertson, Edmund (*Dundee*)
Robson, William Snowdon
Rose, Charles Day
Runciman, Walter
Samuel, Herbt. L. (*Cleveland*)
Samuel, S. M. (*Whitechapel*)
Shackleton, David James
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (*Forfarshire*)
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Soares, Ernest J.
Spencer, Rt. Hn. C R (*Northants*
Taylor, Theodore C. (*Radcliffe*)
Tomkinson, James
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Ure, Alexander
Walton, John Lawson (*Leeds, S.*
Warner, Thos. Courtenay T.
White, Luke (*York, E. R.*)
Whiteley, G. (*York, W. R.*)
Whitley, J. H. (*Halifax*)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Herbert Gladstone and Mr. William M'Arthur.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON moved to insert after "bounty" the words "as defined in the Convention, the provisions of which are set forth in the Schedule to this Act." He said the object of the Amendment was to elicit from the Government an explanation of what they meant by direct or indirect bounty. He objected to the system of legislation by reference, which was becoming very injurious in connection with Acts of Parliament. They had already had from the right hon. Gentleman a different explanation of the Convention from that which appeared on the face of the Bill. This Amendment would enable the Committee to obtain information from the Government as to what they thought were direct and what were indirect bounties, for at present the Bill did not make the meaning clear. He understood that the importation of molasses was on no condition to be prohibited under this Act. That was to say, any amount of bounty-fed molasses might be brought into this country without involving a contravention of the treaty to which the Government had put their hand. That was obviously a total breach of the intention of the Convention, and it might be taken for granted that the Commission would condemn this particular

Act. What were the Government going to do then? Were they going to climb down to the Commission? If they carried out the Act as the House of Commons passed it, they would be breaking the Convention, and if they did not carry out the Convention the Commission would condemn them. Then according to the statement of the right hon. Gentleman the Convention would come practically to an end, and there would be another Conference. That was a point of material importance. There was another point which he wished to direct the attention of the Committee to. The condition of the West Indies had been the only reason assigned why we should pay 8s. more for our sugar, but the opponents of this measure thought it was rather a one-sided bargain. Of course he could not discuss that at the present moment, but he was entitled to ask how the Government reconciled the vote of £200,000 to the West Indies with the condition to which they had agreed, that they would neither encourage nor provoke the production of West Indian sugar, either directly or indirectly. That money was as direct a bounty for the production of sugar as could possibly be conceived. What answer would our representative give to the Foreign Permanent Commission in regard to that matter if they said that this allowance must be withdrawn? If the money should be withdrawn on account of the action of the Commission, the West Indies would be no further from ruin than before. What was meant by the expression "excess of yield"? He could understand a case in which it might be said that some of our sugar-producing colonies were giving a bounty in that direction. The real fact of the matter was that all these questions of bounties were of the most complicated nature.

*THE CHAIRMAN said that the hon. Member insisted on going back on the Second Reading. He must really ask the hon. Member to confine himself to the Amendment.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON said he apologised if he had wandered in any way; but the point to which he had referred did require explanation.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 1, line 15, after the word 'bounty,' to insert the words "as defined in the Convention, the provisions of which are set forth in the schedule to this Act.'"—(*Mr. Sydney Buxton.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. GERALD BALFOUR said that, as the hon. Gentleman remarked, this was a drafting Amendment, but he considered it entirely unnecessary to attach the provisions of the Convention to the Bill as a schedule. The hon. Member had asked a number of questions, but he would point out to the hon. Member that what had to be considered was not whether a bounty was given, let him say, to the West Indies, but whether the Permanent Commission found that a bounty was given. If the Commission found that a bounty was given, of course we should have to take that finding into consideration. A question had been asked as to the effect of Article I of the Convention, which included, among the advantages which constituted a bounty the profits derived from excess yield. It was a common form of bounty to exempt the amount of yield of sugar beyond a certain proportion from internal duty, but as there was no internal duty in the West Indies the question would not arise in relation to West Indian sugar. The hon. Gentleman asked whether we would be compelled to bring to an end the assistance which we had given to the West Indies during the last few years. That assistance would come to an end by itself; it was only given as a temporary expedient until the Convention came into operation.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON said he would remind the right hon. Gentleman that a large amount had been spent, or was in the course of being spent, on central factories in the West Indies.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR said he would wait to see whether the Permanent Commission would include capital expenditure on these central factories as among the cases to be treated as bounty. When it did arise, the Government would take the matter into consideration. [OPPOSITION cries of "Oh! oh!"] They need not be at all terrified. Neither glucose nor molasses came within the operation of the Convention.

*MR. MOULTON said that there was a special exemption of glucose from the operation of the Act, and there was also an express exemption of molasses from the first clause which applied to sugar, which showed that sugar without that exemption would have included molasses. He thought that they need not go to foreign countries in order to discover what were bounties on excessive yields. If the right hon. Gentleman would refer to the Finance Act of 1901, he would there find that the lower duty allowed on molasses amounted to a violation or infraction of the Convention. That was no orginal discovery of his, because as the right hon. Gentleman must be aware, it was pointed out at the Conference that the provisions of the Customs Act imposing a duty on sugar did give a bounty on excessive yield. The whole object of the Convention was that this country should be the milch cow for foreign nations. Did the right hon. Gentleman think that the Courts of law would translate the words of the Act by reference to the Convention unless it was specifically set forth in the Act? When called upon to interpret the words of an Act, they had no right to send out and buy a copy of the Convention on which it was founded. If the right hon. Gentleman thought the Courts were going to interpret the words of this law by the terms used in a French Convention the right hon. Gentleman was, he imagined, very much mistaken. Now, did the right hon. Gentleman mean the word "sugar" to have the same meaning as it had in the Convention? If so, then it included chocolates, biscuits, and condensed milk.

*THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order! That does not arise on this clause.

*MR. MOULTON suggested that the question was raised as to whether it was necessary that the Convention should be made part of the Act for the purpose of fixing the meaning of the words used. There were words used throughout the Act which in the Convention had a special meaning, and if "sugar" was to be translated as it was in the Convention, then "sugar" ought to be put in a definition clause, or the Convention made part of the Act. The fact was the Act would be interpreted according to the meaning of the English language, and the Courts would not follow the example of the Government, and allow the meanings of English words to be defined by a foreign Convention.

MR. LOUGH said the President of the Board of Trade had spoken of this as a mere drafting Amendment. If that were his view, surely he might facilitate the progress of the Bill by asking the Law Officers of the Crown whether or not it was necessary. He might further ask them if the Bill would not be more perfect if the Convention were incorporated in it. Hon. Members on the Opposition benches were opposed to the principle of the Bill, but it having been adopted by the House, they were not disposed to make any obstinate resistance to it. All they asked was that the Convention on which the Bill turned, from beginning to end, ought to be attached to the Bill.

LORD HUGH CECIL (Greenwich) failed to understand why his right hon. friend opposed the Amendment. If it made no difference he might very well accept it, but he was a little sceptical of the suggestion that the Government merely opposed it because it was unnecessary. He could not help thinking that there must be some objection to this Amendment which the Government had not disclosed. He wished to call attention to a statement he had heard with some surprise—one to the effect that in the view of the right hon. Gentleman the word "bounty" did not include capital expenditure on sugar factories. If that were the case he doubted whether it would not be found possible to drive a coach and horses through the whole Convention. If it were true that the West Indian grant was not in the nature of a bounty, it would destroy the Convention altogether.

MR. BRYCE hoped the Government would recognise the great convenience of including the words of the Convention in the schedule of the Bill for the interpretation of a Court of law. At least Article I. should be included, and perhaps Article VII. In the island of Jamaica there were certain conveniences of storage allowed. Would that come under the definition of indirect bounty, and would facilities of conveyance by railway on a Crown colony, when the railway was under State administration, be an indirect bounty? Another point was, suppose we did something in this country or in one of our Crown colonies which was alleged before the Permanent Commission to be in the nature of a bounty. If that body decided that it was an indirect bounty, would we not be bound in good faith to withdraw the legislation in order to keep within the spirit of the Convention? And if we thought the Permanent Commission had come to a wrong decision and taken an unfair advantage of us, would it be a reason why we should withdraw altogether from the Convention. They knew that Austria-Hungary was already in a state of revolt. We certainly ought to know before we pass this Bill what is covered by the words "direct" and "indirect" bounties. He would like to have some further elucidation of the meaning which the Board of Trade and the Government attached to this. Were they proceeding on the assumption that the Convention was imported into the Act to guide their conduct? If they were the Court of law would say that they knew nothing about the Convention. That position ought to be anticipated, and it could be by the acceptance of the Amendment. Let the Government either embody the Convention in the Bill or put in their own definitions. The matter ought not to be left in its present uncertain state.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE said the Government had declared that a bounty in the nature of capital expenditure was not a bounty if that expenditure were incurred before a given date.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: That is only my opinion. It will be for the Permanent Commission to decide the point. It is not a question on which we or any other nation can take any action until the Permanent Commission has given its opinion on it.

MR. BRYCE: We have to guide our own action, and we have the interests of our Crown colonies to look after. We must know what we are going to do.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE said the difference of opinion likely to arise between the President of the Board of Trade and the Permanent Commission was very like the difference of opinion between a Parliamentary candidate and an election Judge as to the date at which expenditure became illegal. Some candidates were under the impression that money which was illegally expended after a certain date was legal expenditure before that date. It seemed to him that the answer of the Government to the question "When is a bounty not a bounty?" was, When it was not found out by the Commission. It was a most unsatisfactory position. He could not accept the suggestion that this was a mere drafting Amendment. It was an Amendment of substance, for they alleged that there was a difference in terms and tone between the Bill and the Convention which the Bill purported to, but did not in fact, incorporate. He doubted if any hon. Member could remember a Bill so completely based on an international Convention which had not the Convention incorporated in it. He could quote several cases to the contrary.

MR. LAWSON WALTON said the question was one of great practical gravity, as under this clause the Government might issue a prohibitory order preventing the importation of sugar or products of sugar from certain specified States.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR made an observation which was inaudible in the Press gallery.

MR. LAWSON WALTON said it was true the Commission were to make a report on the subject, but was it to be understood that that report was to be regarded as conclusive as to whether or not bounties had been placed on sugar, and that the Government were to retain no discretion whatever in the interpretation of the word "bounty."

MR. GERALD BALFOUR said that as regarded non-contracting States that was so.

MR. LAWSON WALTON said if that were so, it was no use arguing the meaning of "bounty," because it would mean whatever this foreign Commission, on which this country was in a permanent minority, might decide. Neither the Courts of law, nor even the Government itself, was to have any voice in the matter. The whole of the administrative, executive, and legal machinery of the country was to perform the ministerial office of giving effect to the dictates of a foreign tribunal. If that was the view of the right hon. Gentleman, a very simple answer to the Amendment was to say that under the Bill we were to have no voice in the matter, but were to carry out the behests of the Commission, no matter how inequitable we might think their decisions to be.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE said the real reason for the opposition of the Government to this Amendment had been made clear, not by the speech, but by the interruptions of the right hon. Gentleman. The Amendment was opposed because it claimed for this country some sort of discretion in the interpretation of the Convention. We had that discretion in relation to every treaty into which we entered, but in this case it was proposed that we should surrender our private judgment, and to that, as a Protestant, he objected. Was a subsidy to West Indian shipping a "bonus on exportation?" We were at present paying about £40,000 in such subsidies, and that might easily be interpreted as a bonus on exportation. But the interpretation was not left with us at all. We were actually handing over the management of our colonial affairs to a foreign Commissioner at Brussels. He did not say that such an arrangement would be much worse, and certainly not more dangerous to the peace of the world, than the present colonial management, but at any rate the Committtee should clearly understand what they were doing. The Colonial Office was being removed from Downing Street to the Continent, from Birmingham to Brussels! That surely went to the root of the whole Empire, and it could not be contended that it was not a point of substance. To say that we were not to reserve any discretion to ourselves, that the matter was to be left entirely to this foreign tribunal, was to make an entirely new departure. These Amendments, although they might not be accepted by the Government, had this advantage: they were making clear, step by step, the nature of the bargain into which we were entering, and with each Amendment it became increasingly evident that we were handing over the control of our commerce to a body whose interest it was to destroy it.

MR. RUNCIMAN said that unless some clear definition of "direct or indirect" bounties was incorporated in the Bill, there would before long be two definitions in the field, viz., the English definition as given in the English law Courts, and the definition as given by the Commission in Brussels. What would be the peculiar position of the trader who desired to import sugar into this country? In dealing with an American State, or possibly with one of our Crown colonies, he would not know whether to make any engagements or not. Under one sub-section sugar in transit was specially exempted from the penalties, but sugar in transit was only a very small part of a trader's commitments; he would probably have commitments carrying him six or twelve months, or even two years ahead. Not feeling sure of his position, he might ask some eminent counsel whether he would be safe in making engagements with Jamaica or the Argentina, and the reply would be, "We do not know; we can tell you what the English interpretation is, but we do not know what the Brussels interpretation will be." It was a question whether the subsidy given to the Jamaica Line, not for the carriage of mails, but for the exportation of Jamaican goods, would not render those goods liable to be penalised. They knew nothing whatever as to the meaning of the words. Here they had a Minister of the Crown asking them to pass words, about which he could give them no definite explanation. He thought they ought to wait until the meaning of those words had been determined. He thought it was very unfair to the House of Commons to ask them to enact words which the responsible Minister could not define, and which the House was not allowed to know the meaning of.

MR. WHITLEY said it was of the very utmost importance that they should have a proper definition of these bounties before they proceeded further with the Bill. Many suggestions had been made, but he would make another, which he thought ought to meet with the acceptance of the Government. He would suggest that they should take their definition from Birmingham. A few weeks ago the Colonial Secretary gave his definition in one of those interesting letters to a working-man, with which he had enlivened the papers so much recently. His definition of a bounty was something produced in the absence of factory inspection, and under lower labour conditions than those in England. Supposing the Brussels Conference took that view, and said that the absence of factory inspection and the lower labour conditions constituted a bounty in the production of sugar. How would the West Indies stand that? What about the coolie labour which would be in direct competition with the sugar from Germany? The Government was not treating the Committee fairly in merely pushing this matter on to the Permanent Commission. When they were asked to assent to the passage of Bills they were supposed to be convinced that they were in the interests of the people of this country, and he thought they would be neglecting their duty if they allowed a Bill to pass which placed such powers in the hands of a foreign Commission where they had only a single representative.

MR. URE said he was not so sure that the sugar referred to in the two documents meant the same thing.

*THE CHAIRMAN: Order, order. It will not be in order to discuss that question now. There is an Amendment which will come up later on upon which the hon. Member's observations will be in order.

MR. URE said that was an illustration which showed the necessity of embodying the Convention in the Bill, because without it they would be landed in endless difficulties.

*THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member must confine himself to this particular subject.

MR. WILLIAM MCARTHUR (Cornwall, St. Austell) suggested that the simplest course would be to adjourn the discussion in order that the Ministers in charge might get to know what answer to give to the House of Commons.

MR. COURTENAY WARNER (Staffordshire, Lichfield) said this Permanent Commission might take the view that no Englishman would accept, and which an English Judge might think was not a bounty. Were they going to allow English merchants to be treated in a way which was unfair to this country? Was an English Court of law to be no protection, no matter how unfair foreign jurisdiction might be? What remedy had they got in case the Permanent Commission made some decree which everybody in this country thought unfair? Were they going to acquiesce in that?

*THE CHAIRMAN: The hon. Gentleman is not confining himself to this Amendment, and he is taking a very wide view of the subject before the Committee.

MR. COURTENAY WARNER contended that the Convention ought to be printed as schedule to this Bill. If it was not printed they came to the difficulty that a Court of law had no power to protect a British subject, even though the Permanent Commission might have done something contrary to this very treaty, which ought to have been in the Bill.

MR. LOUGH suggested that they should now be allowed to take the Division on the understanding that they would not proceed further with the Bill.

Mr. LEVY said it appeared to him that one of the reasons why the President of the Board of Trade objected to the words of the Convention being added to the Bill was that we were at the present moment at variance with the majority of the parties to the Convention, with regard to the action of our colonies. We were claiming to deal with our colonies as we liked, and the other signatories declared that we had no right to do so.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 61; Noes, 118. (Division List No. 212.)

AYES.

Asher, Alexander
Barran, Rowland Hirst
Bayley, Thomas (*Derbyshire*)
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Bryce, Right Hon. James
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Causton, Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Cecil, Lord Hugh (*Greenwich*)
Cremer, William Randal
Dalziel, James Henry
Devlin, Joseph (*Kilkenny, N.*)
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Elibank, Master of
Emmott, Alfred
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert J.
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Griffith, Ellis J.
Gurdon, Sir W. Brampton
Harwood, George
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Chas. Seale-
Hayter, Rt Hon Sir Arthur D.
Helme, Norval Watson
Holland, Sir William Henry
Humphreys-Owen, Arthur C.
Hutton, Alfred E. (*Morley*)
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kemp, Lieut.-Colonel George
Kilbride, Denis
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (*Cornwall*)
Lewis, John Herbert
M'Arthur, William (*Cornwall*
M'Killop, W. (*Sligo, North*)
M'Laren, Sir Charles Benj.
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Moss, Samuel
Nussey, Thomas Willans
Partington, Oswald
Paulton, James Mellor
Priestley, Arthur
Rickett, J. Compton
Rigg, Richard
Robson, William Snowdon
Runciman, Walter
Samuel, Herbt. L. (*Cleveland*)
Samuel, S. M. (*Whitechapel*)
Shackleton, David James
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Sinclair, John (*Forfarshire*)
Soares, Ernest J.
Taylor, Theodore C. (*Radcliffe*)
Tomkinson, James
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Ure, Alexander
Warner, Thos. Courtenay T.
White, Luke (*York, E.R.*)
Whiteley, G. (*York, W. R.*)
Whitley, J. H. (*Halifax*)
Whittaker, Thomas Palmer

Tellers for the Ayes—Mr. Lough and Mr. Levy.

NOES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Allhusen, Aug. Henry Eden
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Atkinson, Right Hon. John
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (*Man'r*
Balfour, Rt Hn Gerald W (*Leeds*)
Balfour, Kenneth R. (*Christch*
Bentinck, Lord Henry C.
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Campbell, J. H. M. (*Dublin Univ*
Cautley, Henry Strother
Cavendish, R. F. (*N. Lancs.*)
Cavendish, V. C. W. (*Derbysh*
Chamberlain, Rt Hon J (*Birm*
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J A (*Worc.*
Chapman, Edward
Charrington, Spencer
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Charles Ready
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Corbett, T. L. (*Down, North.*)
Craig, Charles Curtis (*Antrim S.*
Crossley, Sir Savile
Davenport, William Bromley
Dickson, Charles Scott
Disraeli, Coningsby Ralph
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Faber, Edmund B. (*Hants, W.*)
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson, Rt Hn Sir J. (*Manc'r.*
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Philip S. (*Warwick, S. W*
Fyler, John Arthur
Galloway, William Johnson
Godson, Sir Augustus Frederick
Gordon, J. (*Londonderry, S.*)
Gore, Hon G R C Ormsby- (*Salop*
Goschen, Hon. Geo. Joachim
Greene, W. Raymond (*Cambs*
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Hambro, Charles Eric
Hamilton, Rt Hn Ld. G. (*Midx*
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, Arthur H. (*Hanley*)
Heath, James (*Staffords, N. W*
Keswick, William
Law, Andrew Bonar (*Glasgow*
Lawson, John Grant (*Yorks N. R*
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N. S
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Rt. Hn. W. (*Bristol, S.*
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Francis William
Lowther, C. (*Cumb. Eskdale*)
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas, Reginald J. (*Portsmouth*
Macdona, John Cumming
Maxwell, W. J. H. (*Dumfriessh.*
Milvain, Thomas
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
Montagu, G. (*Huntingdon*)
Montagu, Hon. J. Scott (*Hants.*
Morgan, David J (*Walthamstow*
Morrell, George Herbert
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
Murray, Rt Hn A Graham (*Bute*
Murray, Charles J. (*Coventry*)
Nicholson, William Graham
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Palmer, Walter (*Salisbury*)
Percy, Earl
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.

Reid, James (*Greenock*)
Renwick, George
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. C. Thomson
Roberts, Samuel (*Sheffield*)
Robertson, H. (*Hackney*)
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Seely, Maj. J. E. B. (*Isle of Wight*
Smith, James Parker (*Lanark*)
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (*Strand*)
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Lord (*Lancs.*)
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
Talbot, Lord E. (*Chichester*)
Talbot, Rt Hn. J. G. (*Oxf'd Univ.*
Thornton, Percy M.
Tollemache, Henry James
Tomlinson, Sir Wm. Edw. M.
Valentia, Viscount
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt. Hon. Sir W. H.
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Webb, Col. William George
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wortley, Rt. Hon. C. B. Stuart
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—
Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Anstruther.

Committee report Progress, to sit again this day.

PATENT OFFICE EXTENSION (RE-COMMITTED) BILL.

(Considered in Committee.)

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. J. W. LOWTHER, (Cumberland, Penrith), in the Chair.]

Clause 4.

MR. WHITLEY (Halifax) said he hoped that this clause would be struck out of the Bill unless the Chancellor of the Exchequer could give some explanation of it. He wanted to know if it was the custom for one public Department to plunder another.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. RITCHIE, Croydon) said that the Bill had been under the consideration of the Exchequer, and this clause referred merely to the adjustment of accounts.

Clause 4 agreed to.

Remaining clauses agreed to.

Bill reported without Amendment.

Bill read the third time and passed.

NAVY AND ARMY EXPENDITURE, 1901-2.

Committee to consider the savings and deficiencies upon Navy and Army grants for 1901-2, and the temporary sanction obtained from the Treasury by the Navy and Army Departments to the expenditure not provided for in the grants for that year, upon Thursday.

Ordered, That the Appropriation Accounts for the Navy and Army Departments, which were presented on the 24th and 23rd days of February last, respectively be referred to the Committee.—(*Mr. Elliot.*)

MOTOR-CARS [EXCISE DUTY].

Committee to consider of authorising the imposition of an Excise Duty on persons employed as drivers of motor-cars in pursuance of any Act of the present session to amend the Locomotives on Highways Act, 1896 (King's recommendation signified) this day.—(*Sir A. Acland-Hood.*)

Whereupon, in pursuance of the Order of the House of the 28th day of July, Mr. Speaker adjourned the House without Question put.

Adjourned at twenty minutes after One o'clock.

HOUSE OF LORDS.

Wednesday, 5*th August*, 1903.

PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

Hainault Forest Bill; Read 3ª, with the Amendments, and passed, and returned to the Commons.

Glasgow Corporation (Police) Order Confirmation Bill [H.L.]; returned from the Commons agreed to.

Somerset and District Electric Power Bill [H.L.]; Birmingham District Tramways Bill [H.L.]; Returned from the Commons agreed to, with Amendments. The said Amendments considered, and agreed to.

Baker Street and Waterloo Railway (Extension of Time) Bill; Beckenham Urban District Council Bill; London County Council (Money) Bill; London County Council (Tramways and Improvements) Bill; Mullingar, Kells, and Drogheda Railway Bill; Returned from the Commons, with the Amendments agreed to.

Wood Green Urban District Council Bill; Returned from the Commons with several of the Amendments agreed to, and one disagreed to, with reasons for such disagreement.

Fife Electric Power Bill [H.L.]; Returned from the Commons with the Amendment to which the Lords have disagreed, not insisted on.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

CLERGY (WEST INDIES).

Return of the amount payable on 5th January, 1903, out of the Consolidated Fund, for ecclesiastical purposes in the West Indies.

SUPERANNUATION ACT, 1887.

Return for the year ended 31st March, 1903, of the Army and Navy Officers permitted, under Rule 2 of the Regulations drawn up under Section 6 of the Superannuation Act, 1887, to hold civil employment of profit under public departments.

Laid before the House (pursuant to Act), and ordered to lie on the Table.

PATENT OFFICE (EXTENSION) BILL.

Brought from the Commons.

PISTOLS BILL.

Returned from the Commons, with the Amendments agreed to.

LICENSING ACTS (SCOTLAND) CONSOLIDATION AND AMENDMENT BILL.

Amendments reported (according to order), and Bill to be read 3 on Monday next.

LONDON EDUCATION BILL.

Read 3ª (according to order), and passed, and returned to the Commons.

POOR LAW (DISSOLUTION OF SCHOOL DISTRICTS AND ADJUSTMENTS) BILL.

[SECOND READING.]

Order of the day for the Second Reading read.

LORD KENYON: My Lords, the only object of this Bill is to remedy two minor imperfections in the existing law which have been found to cause practical difficulties. Under the Poor Law Acts unions have, in some instances, been combined into districts for the purpose of providing institutions for the maintenance and education of pauper children. The Acts only enable a district of this kind to be dissolved if it is contained wholly or partly in the Metropolis. There are at present cases where it is desirable that some of these districts which are wholly outside the Metropolis should be dissolved. Clause 1 of the Bill will enable this to be done. Where areas are altered under the Poor Law Acts, the necessary adjustments between the unions and parishes concerned have to be made by the Local Government Board. Circumstances have much altered since the enactments on this subject were passed, and difficulties have arisen in the working of them which have led to litigation. Where areas are altered under the Local Government Act, 1888, the adjustments are settled by agreement between the local authorities affected, or in default by arbitration. The provisions in the Act of 1888 with regard to adjustments are much more elastic than those in the Poor Law Acts, and it is proposed by Clause 2 of the Bill to apply them to adjustments under those Acts. Sub-clause 1 of Clause 2 accordingly makes Section 62 of the Local Government Act, 1888, applicable to such adjustments, the modifications which are set out in the first schedule being merely consequential and necessary for adapting the provisions of the section to the circumstances of guardians, boards of management and parochial authorities. Clause 3 and the second schedule merely repeal the existing provisions, with regard to these adjustments, which will be rendered unnecessary. The net result of Clauses 2 and 3 is to make the ordinary methods of adjustment, which now apply to all the various alterations of area which are constantly taking place under the Local Government Acts, applicable to the case of alterations of areas under the Poor Law Acts in place of the cumbrous, obsolete and imperfect methods of those Acts. The Bill passed the House of Commons without alteration or objection, and I beg to move that it be read a second time.

Moved, "That the Bill be now read 2^a."—(*Lord Kenyon.*)

On Question, Bill read 2 (according to order, and committed to a Committee of the whole House to-morrow.

MARINE STORE DEALERS (IRELAND) BILL.

The Report of Amendments to be received to-morrow.

PATENT OFFICE (EXTENSION) BILL.

Read 1^a; to be printed and referred to the Examiners. (No. 193.)

House adjourned at twenty minutes before Five o'clock, till To-morrow, half-past Ten o'clock.

HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Wednesday, 5th August, 1903.

The House met at Two of the clock.

UNOPPOSED PRIVATE BILL BUSINESS.

South Shields Corporation Bill. Lords' Amendments considered, and agreed to.

Bangor Corporation Bill [Lords]. As amended, considered; Amendments made; Bill to be read the third time.

Hastings Harbour Bill [Lords]. Read a second time, and committed.

East Ham Improvement Bill (by Order). Lords Amendments considered:

Lords Amendments as far as the Amendment in page 13, agreed to.

Lords Amendments, in page 13, to leave out Clause 14, and insert Clause 14A, the next Amendment, read a second time, amended, and agreed to.

Subsequent Lords Amendments agreed to.

Airdrie and Coatbridge Tramways Order Confirmation Bill; Lerwick Harbour Improvements Act (1877) Amendment Order Confirmation Bill. Read the third time and passed.

Lanarkshire Tramways Order Confirmation Bill [Lords]. Read the third time, and passed, without Amendment.

Glasgow Corporation Tramways Order Confirmation Bill [Lords]. Considered; to be read the third time to-morrow.

RETURNS, REPORTS, ETC.

LAND REGISTRY.

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 19th May; *Mr. Henry David Greene*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 315.]

CLERGY (WEST INDIES).

Copy presented, of Return of the Amount payable on 5th January 1903, out of the Consolidated Fund for ecclesiastical purposes in the West Indies [by Act]; to lie upon the Table.

SUPERANNUATION ACT, 1887.

Copy presented, of Return for the year ended 31st March, 1903, of the Army and Navy officers permitted, under Rule 2 of the Regulations drawn up under Section 6 of the Act, to hold civil employment of profit under Public Departments [by Act]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 316.]

PRISONS (IRELAND).

Copy presented, of twenty-fifth Report of the General Prisons Board (Ireland) for 1902–3, with an Appendix [by Command]; to lie upon the Table.

CASUALTIES TO SHIPS.

Return presented, relative thereto [ordered 17th March; *Mr. Lough*]; to lie upon the Table, and to be printed. [No. 317.]

Papers laid upon the Table by the Clerk of the House.

ADJOURNMENT MOTIONS UNDER STANDING ORDER No. 10.

Return relative thereto [ordered 4th August; *Mr. Caldwell*]; to be printed. [No. 318.]

CLOSURE OF DEBATE (STANDING ORDER No. 26).

Return relative thereto [orderd 4th August; *Mr. Caldwell*]; to be printed. [No. 319.]

DIVISIONS OF THE HOUSE.

Return relative thereto [ordered 4th August; *Mr. Caldwell*]; to be printed.

PUBLIC BILLS.

Return relative thereto [ordered 4th August; *Mr. Caldwell*]; to be printed.

PUBLIC PETITIONS.

Return relative thereto [ordered 4th August; *Mr. Caldwell*]; to be printed.

SELECT COMMITTEES.

Return relative thereto [ordered 4th August; *Mr. Caldwell*]; to be printed.

SITTINGS OF THE HOUSE.

Return relative thereto [ordered 4th August; [*Mr. Caldwell*]; to be printed.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE (DAYS OCCUPIED BY GOVERNMENT AND BY PRIVATE MEMBERS).

Return relative thereto [ordered 4th August; *Mr. Caldwell*]; to be printed. [No. 320.]

PRIVATE BILLS AND PRIVATE BUSINESS.

Return relative thereto [ordered 4th August; *Mr. Caldwell*]; to be printed.

TRANSPORTS (SOUTH AFRICAN WAR).

Return ordered, "giving the names of all the transports hired for the conveyance of troops, stores, and material to South Africa in 1899, 1900, 1901, and 1902, and giving in a tabular form the following particulars:—(1) name of vessel; (2) owner; (3) broker, if any, through whom the vessel was chartered; (4) tonnage; (5) speed; (6) rate per ton per month; (7) minimum time for which engaged; (8) date of agreement; (9) date at which pay commenced; (10) date at which pay ceased; and (11) total sum paid by Government for hire and other charges."—(*Mr. Buchanan.*)

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS CIRCULATED WITH THE VOTES.

Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway—Level Crossings.

MR. MARSHALL HALL (Lancashire, Southport): To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether the attention of his Department has been called to the level crossings on the Liverpool-Southport section of the Lancashire and Yorkshire Railway; and, if so, whether he will order an inquiry to be held, to ascertain whether the level crossings constitute a danger to the public, before the proposed electrification of that section, which is now in course of construction, is completed.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) Representations in regard to the level crossings in question have been made to the Board of Trade from time to time. I will consider the expediency of calling the attention of an inspecting officer to the allegation of danger.

Shipping Subsidies.

MR. CHARLES M'ARTHUR (Liverpool, Exchange): To ask the President of the Board of Trade whether, in view of the injury caused to the shipping trade of the United Kingdom by bounties on foreign shipping, and by the exclusion of British vessels from the coasting trade of various foreign Powers, the Government have considered the advisability of adopting means to remove or countervail such bounties, as also to secure the re-admission of British vessels to the trades from which they are now excluded, if needful by making the admission of foreign vessels to the British and colonial trade of the Empire conditional upon reciprocal treatment as regards British vessels, as recommended by the Select Committee on Shipping Subsidies and the Conference of Colonial Premiers; and whether the interests of the British shipping trade will in all respects be fully taken into account in connection with the fiscal inquiry now proceeding.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) The answer is in the affirmative.

Emigrants from, Immigrants into, United Kingdom.

MR. D. A. THOMAS (Merthyr Tydvil): To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he can give the total number of emigrants of British and Irish origin from the United Kingdom in the years 1881, 1891, and 1901, respectively; also the number who emigrated in those years to the United States, British North America, and Australia and New Zealand, respectively; and also for the same years the total number of immigrants that entered the United Kingdom from countries out of Europe.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) The particulars required are given on pages 31 and 39 of the Board of Trade Return of Emigration and Immigration (Parliamentary Paper, No. 183, of Session 1902).

Imports into Canada from United Kingdom and United States.

MR. ALFRED DAVIES (Carmarthen Boroughs): To ask the President of the Board of Trade if he can state when the Return of the Value of Imports into Canada from the United Kingdom and the United States since the Canadian preferential tariff for British goods came into force, ordered by the House on the 29th July to be printed, will be issued.

(*Answered by Mr. Gerald Balfour.*) This will be issued in about a week's time.

Cost of Elementary Education in England and Wales.

MR. ALFRED DAVIES: To ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will state how much of the cost of elementary education for 1902-3, amounting to £8,589,889, was spent in England and Wales respectively.

(*Answered by Mr. Ritchie.*) The apportionment suggested by the hon. Member could not be made without a calculation which would at best be approximate only, and would involve much labour and require a considerable time. I do not think such a calculation would serve any useful purpose, as the same grants are made, and under the same conditions, in England and Wales.

Glasgow Post Office—Age Limit.

MR. JAMES O'CONNOR (Wicklow, W.): To ask the Postmaster-General whether he will explain why an assistant superintendent, first class, who is sixty-four years of age, is at present employed in the Postal Department at Glasgow, and has been allowed to exceed the age limit laid down by the Tweedmouth Committee, by four years; will he say whether he now contemplates allowing him to retire from the Service; and, if so, on what date.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) The Question appears to be asked under a misapprehension, as the age for compulsory retirement is fixed by Order in Council at sixty-five and not sixty. The Tweedmouth Committee made no recommendation on the subject.

Glasgow and Govan Post Offices.

MR. JAMES O'CONNOR: To ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that the duties of check clerk in the postal department at Glasgow are performed by officers below the rank of clerk, although the postmaster at that office has admitted that these duties pertain to the clerk's class; if so, will he state the cause of this state of affairs; and whether, in view of the fact that these officers are in charge of one of the busiest sections from 4 p.m. till 7.30 p.m., will he take steps to ensure that in future only officers in the clerk's class shall be employed in the check clerk's duties.

To ask the Postmaster-General whether he is aware that junior officers who are wholly unacquainted with counter duties are employed at Govan branch office, and that these officers, one of whom is No. 233 in the class of sorting clerks, and who is in receipt of only 22s. per week, lock up safes at 8.30 p.m. containing valuable stock, and thereafter retain both the keys of the safes and of the office in their possession until 6.30 the following morning; that these junior officers are in sole charge of the office and superintend thirty-five postmen at both the early morning and last deliveries, and that, if necessary, they are called upon to suspend postmen who may have over twenty years' service in case of any serious offence; and, if so, will he give instructions to employ officers in these posts at that branch office who are more fitted to hold such responsible positions.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) I have no information as to the facts alleged in these Questions, but I am making inquiry upon the subject.

Betting Circulars.

MR. H. C. RICHARDS (Finsbury, E).: To ask the Postmaster-General if his attention has been called to the fact that prospectuses and proposals of the Systematic Play Syndicate, Monte Carlo, are being posted in England in open envelopes at the halfpenny rate of postage, and are being circulated among officers in the Army by means of the post; and, if so, whether he can take steps to put a stop to such use of the halfpenny post.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) I am indebted to the hon. Member for sending me a copy of the prospectus to which he refers. Any documents of this nature found in the post in open envelopes will be destroyed.

Post Office Pensions—Case of B. J. Foreman.

MR. LOUIS SINCLAIR (Essex, Romford): To ask the Postmaster-General if he will state on what grounds a certificate for pension has been refused Benjamin John Foreman, for 34 years counter clerk and telegraphist in the employ of the Post Office.

(*Answered by Mr. Austen Chamberlain.*) Mr. B. J. Foreman was not qualified for the award of a pension at the time when his service was terminated, as he was neither sixty years of age nor incapacitated from the performance of his duty. No question, therefore, of the grant of a certificate arises.

Functions of Foreign Ministries of Commerce.

MR. LOUIS SINCLAIR: To ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether he is now in a position to lay before the House the Reports as to the constitution and functions of Foreign Ministries of Commerce.

(*Answered by Lord Cranborne.*) The last of these Reports has now been received. They will be laid before the House at as early a date as possible.

Foreign Drama and Opera (Subsidies) Return.

MR. STUART WORTLEY (Sheffield, Hallam): To ask the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether there is any prospect of an early presentation of the Return relative to Drama and Opera (Subsidies) Foreign Countries, etc., ordered on 2nd March 1903, on the Motion of the Member for the Hallam Division of Sheffield.

(*Answered by Lord Cranborne.*) We have not received replies from all the countries in regard to which inquiries were made in pursuance of the Return ordered by the House. Those replies we have received will be laid without further delay.

Education Board for Wales.

MR. GEORGE KENYON (Denbigh): To ask the Secretary to the Board of Education whether he can state the present position of negotiations which are taking place with the representatives of County Councils in Wales as to the establishment of a joint education board for Wales; and whether he will be in a position to lay any Papers upon the Table before the Prorogation of Parliament.

(*Answered by Sir William Anson.*) The Board are in communication with the County Councils in Wales on the subject referred to, but will probably not be in a position to lay Papers upon the Table of the House before the Prorogation of Parliament.

Board of Education—Teachers' Examinations.

MR. NORMAN (Wolverhampton, S): To ask the Secretary to the Board of Education whether he is aware that at the recent certificate examination by the Board of Education candidates were required to answer six questions out of thirty-six in the paper upon theory of teaching and school management, these six questions to be taken from at least three of the six sections of the paper, whereas four of the sections were outside of the syllabus issued by the Board; and, if so, whether, in order to avoid the difficulties thus imposed upon candidates who had prepared themselves according to the official syllabus, he will give instructions that this shall not occur again.

(*Answered by Sir William Anson.*) It is understood that the Question refers to the syllabus issued by the Board for acting teachers, and does not refer to the case of training college students. The candidates were required to answer not more than six questions selected from at least three sections of the paper. Two sections of the paper bear directly on the official syllabus, and from the remaining sixteen questions a candidate would have no difficulty in finding more than enough based upon the syllabus to complete the necessary number of answers. Without admitting that the the questions were outside the syllabus, it is possible that the syllabus may have suggested a more limited range of thought and study than is desirable for candidates. Allowance will be made for this, if necessary, in marking the papers.

Charity Commissioners and Wilder's Charity.

MAJOR SEELY (Isle of Wight): To ask the hon. Member for the Tunbridge Division whether his attention has been called to representations made by public bodies and others with reference to the scheme formulated by the Charity Commissioners for the administration of Wilder's Charity; and if he can state what were the facts and representations considered by the Charity Commissioners before formulating the scheme.

(*Answered by Mr. Griffith Boscawen.*) Ryde, Isle of Wight. Augusta Wilder's Charity. 1. The representations made by public bodies and others with reference to the scheme which has been established in this matter were very carefully considered by the Commissioners. 2. The charity is an almshouse founded at Ryde in 1856 for natives of the Isle of Wight, being members of the Church of England or Protestant Dissenters holding the doctrine of the Trinity as taught by the Church of England. The administering trustees were to be the vicar and churchwardens of Newchurch, an ancient parish which occupied a large portion of the centre of the island, and included both Ryde and Ventnor. 3. In 1866 the parish of Newchurch was divided into Newchurch, Ryde, and Ventnor, and from that time the almshouse was administered, irregularly, but not unnaturally, by the vicar and churchwardens of Ryde, Ryde being the portion where the almshouse was situated. No complaint was made of the administration; and the influence of the trustees had been effectual to obtain additional funds from a voluntary source, without which there would be no adequate provision for the inmates by way of maintenance. 4. It was considered by the Commissioners that a scheme was necessary to put the administration on a regular footing, and they have accordingly substituted for the vicar and churchwardens of Newchurch, who are no longer in touch with the almshouse, the vicar and churchwardens of Ryde, who have been for many years, though irregularly, the sole administrators. In pursuance of the practice which has of late years been approved they added to the vicar and churchwardens of Ryde three representatives of the County Council, but they reserved to the vicar a casting vote as chairman. 5. Suggestions were received during the period of publication from the County Council claiming a majority of the governing body, and from the Ventnor Urban District Council claiming representation. Since the scheme was established similar claims have been received from the Isle of Wight Rural District Council and Board of Guardians, and also protests from several parish councils against the retention of the vicar and churchwardens. The composition of the governing body as settled by the Commissioners represents a medium between these claims and the state of things found existing; and it is justified in the present case by the following considerations:—(*a*) The charity is not a parochial charity within the Local Government Act, 1894; (*b*) It is restricted to a limited class of beneficiaries with a strong Church of England colour; (*c*) The expressed intention of the foundress was to repose her full confidence in the vicar and churchwardens of the parish in which her almshouse was situated; a confidence which the Commissioners find to have been justified by their administration; (*d*) The appropriate source of a limited representative element in the governing body of a charity extending to a whole county appears to be the County Council.

Improved Landing Facilities at Connaloughey, Co. Kerry.

MR. BOLAND Kerry, S.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether the Congested Districts Board will favourably entertain the proposal to improve the landing facilities at Connaloughey, Co. Kerry.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) The question of improving the landing accommodation at this place was recently before the Board. The further consideration of the proposal was postponed in favour of other demands upon the resources of the Board of relatively greater importance.

Disease of Foul Brood in Bees in Ireland.

MR. BOLAND: To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether he can now state the result of the correspondence between the Irish and English Agricultural Departments with respect to the means to be taken to stamp out the disease of foul brood in bees; and whether in the absence of special legislation, any steps can be taken immediately by the Irish Department of Agriculture to check the spreading of the disease.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) Correspondence and inquiries are still proceeding. County Committees which have appointed instructors in bee-keeping may, with the consent of the owners, destroy bees affected with foul brood, and may, with the approval of the Department of Agriculture, compensate such owners out of funds provided for agricultural and technical instruction.

Irish Resident Magistrates.

MR. JOSEPH DEVLIN (Kilkenny, N.): To ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland if he will state whether there is a rule in operation which limits the time during which a resident magistrate can remain in any particular district.

(*Answered by Mr. Wyndham.*) There is no such rule.

Workmen Employees of the War Office and Volunteer Camps.

MR. KEIR HARDIE (Merthyr Tydvil): To ask the Secretary of State for War whether he will make representations to the Lords Commissioners of the Treasury in favour of having the same special relief given to the workmen employees of the War Office as is referred to in the circular issued on 20th May with reference to leave to attend Volunteer camps, and which applies to Civil servants only.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Brodrick.*) This question has been very carefully considered, but it has not been found possible to extend the grant of special leave with pay to the large number of Government employees who would be affected.

Population and area of African Protectorates.

MR. HENRY J. WILSON (Yorkshire, W.R., Holmfirth): To ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if he will state what is approximately the area of the four African Protectorates referred to in Command Paper 1635, Africa, No. 9, 1903, and the approximate populations, distinguishing between Natives and Europeans.

(*Answered by Mr. Secretary Chamberlain.*) The approximate areas and populations are:—East Africa Protectorate: area 350,000 square miles; population, 4,000,000, including 5,000 Asiatics and 450 Europeans and Eurasians. Uganda Protectorate: area 80,000 square miles; population, Natives, under 4,000,000; Europeans about 300. British Central Africa: area 42,217 square miles; population Native. This has been variously estimated at figures ranging from 3,000,000 to 850,000. A very recent Return estimates it at 736,724. Europeans 538. Somaliland: area 68,000 square miles; population 500,000, chiefly nomadic. The estimates of the Native population must, in the absence of anything approaching a census, be received as in the main conjectural.

Royal Commission on Militia and Volunteers.

LIEUTENANT-COLONEL PRYCE-JONES (Montgomery Boroughs): To ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he can give any information as to when the Royal Commission on the Militia and Volunteers is likely to terminate its inquiries and to issue its Report.

(*Answered by Mr. A. J. Balfour.*) I understand that the Commission have not yet concluded taking evidence, and therefore it is impossible to mention even an approximate date for the termination of their labours.

Fiscal Inquiry—Rents, Mining Royalties, and Railway Rates.

MR. KEIR HARDIE: To ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the Cabinet inquiry into the trade of the country will include an investigation into the difference between rents, mining royalties, and railway rates paid in Great Britain as compared with those paid on the Continent, where minerals and railways are mainly State property, and the effect of such difference on British trade and commerce.

(*Answered by Mr. A. J. Balfour.*) With regard to this Question, I fear I can only repeat the terms of a former answer, viz., that it would, I think, be inexpedient, on the one hand, to lay down any limits beyond which the inquiry ought not to go, and on the other, formally to include within it everything which could be described as germane to the subject. If the first course were adopted it might be found that most important topics were excluded; if the second the range of investigation might become almost unmanageable.†

Shipbuilding Programme for Current Year.

MR. DUKE (Plymouth): To ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether the battleships to be laid down before the conclusion of the present financial year are identical with the three ships which were to be laid down in April next; and, if so, whether he will give the reasons for accelerating the commencement of these vessels.

(*Answered by Mr. Arnold-Forster.*) The three battleships which it is proposed to lay down before the conclusion of the present financial year are not identical with those which it is hoped may be begun in April next. The former are the ships of the current year's programme, and will be built by contract. The latter are the ships which, subject to the sanction of Parliament, will be begun in 1904–5. Arrangements have been made which will permit of these ships being laid down simultaneously in the three principal Dockyards at the beginning of April next.

Petition of Dockyard Employees.

MR. REGINALD LUCAS (Portsmouth): To ask the Secretary to the

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† See (4) *Debates*, cxxv., 1306.

Admiralty whether he can hold out hopes that some announcement concerning the petitions of dockyard employees will be made before the Appropriation Bill is introduced.

(*Answered by Mr. Arnold-Forster.*) I am afraid I am not in a position to give a definite promise that the decisions on these questions will be announced by a particular date, but I hope that the announcement will at any rate be made before the House rises.

QUESTIONS IN THE HOUSE.

South African War—Transports.

MR. BUCHANAN (Perthshire, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary to the Admiralty whether he will grant the Return on the Paper relating to the hire of Transports during the South African War,† in accordance with the undertaking given on 5th February 1900.

THE SECRETARY TO THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. ARNOLD-FORSTER, Belfast, W.): There is no objection to giving the Return in the form asked for, but it may take some time to prepare.

General De Wet's Guns.

MR. MURPHY (Kerry, E.): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for the Colonies if he will say what is the reason why General De Wet has been deprived of his guns.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR THE COLONIES (Mr. J. CHAMBERLAIN, Birmingham, W.): I have no information on the subject of the alleged deprivation, but am inquiring.

MR. MURPHY: Can the right hon. Gentleman give an answer before the end of the session.

MR. J. CHAMBERLAIN: That I cannot say, but I shall be pleased to send the reply to the hon. Member.

India and the Tariff Inquiry.

MR. MANSFIELD (Lincolnshire, Spalding): I beg to ask the Secretary of State for India will he state whether the Government of India has at any time during the last few years either asked for preferential treatment or stated that a system of preferential tariffs would be advantageous to India; and, if so, will he publish any correspondence on the matter that has taken place.

THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR INDIA (Lord GEORGE HAMILTON, Middlesex, Ealing): The answer to the first portion of the Question is in the negative.

Imprisoned Chinese Journalists at Shanghai.

MR. BUCHANAN: On behalf of the hon. Member for South Wolverhampton, I beg to ask the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs whether instructions have yet been sent to His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires in Pekin concerning the case of the six Chinese journalists under arrest in Shanghai on a charge of high treason; and, if so, can he state the purport of these instructions.

THE PRIME MINISTER AND FIRST LORD OF THE TREASURY (Mr. A. J. BALFOUR, Manchester, E., for Lord CRANBORNE): His Majesty's representative at Pekin has been instructed by telegraph that in the opinion of His Majesty's Government the prisoners should not be surrendered.

Government Officials and the Press.

MR. WHITLEY (Halifax): I beg to ask Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer if his attention has been called to a letter which appeared in the public Press on Saturday last over the signature "A Revenue Official;" and, if so, will he state whether the rules of the Revenue Department permit one of its officials to send communications to the Press dealing with a matter of controversial politics which is the subject of an inquiry in his Department.

THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. RITCHIE, Croydon): Communications to the Press, such as that to which the hon. Member refers, if made by an officer actually in Government employment, are contrary to the rules of the service.

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† See page 1574.

Railway Rates on Agricultural Produce.

CAPTAIN BAGOT (Westmoreland, Kendal): I beg to ask the hon. Member for North Hunts, as representing the President of the Board of Agriculture, whether he has recently made representations to the leading railway companies with regard to the rates charged and the facilities given for the carriage of agricultural produce; and, if so, whether he will state what is the present position of this matter.

MR. AILWYN FELLOWES (Huntingdonshire, Ramsey.): Yes, Sir; my noble friend became aware on his advent to office of the importance which is attached by agriculturists to the subject to which my hon. friend refers, and he thereupon placed himself in communication with leading railway officials with a view if possible to personal conference respecting it. The object which my noble friend had in view was of a twofold character. In the first place he wished to know generally the views of the railway companies with respect to the principal complaints and suggestions made by agriculturists, and secondly he desired to learn from them what in their opinion might be done by consignors of agricultural produce, either individually or in combination, to secure for themselves the best possible terms and facilities for the carriage of their goods. The General and Traffic Managers of the leading companies, nine in number, were good enough at once to accede to my noble friend's wishes in this respect, and a conference was held a few days ago between them, a representative of the Board of Trade, and ourselves, when the most important questions at issue were discussed in a more or less informal manner. As a result of the interchange of views which then took place it was arranged that we should bring to the notice of the individual companies concerned the various representations and proposals made to us, and we hope also to arrange later on for the holding from time to time of local conferences at which a representative of the Board may be present, and at which specific questions may be discussed, and the position of the companies and of the consignors explained. My noble friend desires to acknowledge the very friendly and reasonable spirit in which the General Managers have met him in this matter, and he is hopeful that the results of the action which, with their assistance, he is now taking may be of practical benefit to all concerned.

Church of England School Managers.

MR. MANSFIELD: I beg to ask the Secretary to the Board of Education will he state whether the orders issued to Church of England schools will require the co-optative or representative managers to reside in or near the parish, or to have a life estate in real property therein, and to be, and continue to be, *bonâ fide* members of the Church of England, and to sign a declaration that they are members of the Church of England.

THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION (Sir WILLIAM ANSON, Oxford University): Draft orders issued under the Education Act, 1902, Section 11, in the case of Church of England schools will usually, according to the circumstances of the case, contain some or all of the provisions mentioned in the Question.

Imprisonment for Contempt of Court in Ireland—Case of Mrs. Madigan.

MR. WILLIAM REDMOND (Clare, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland whether, in view of her age of 80 years, he will advise the Lord Lieutenant to order the release of Mrs. Madigan, of Kilrush, who is at present in Limerick Gaol for contempt of Court in having failed to carry out some matter in connection with a will.

THE CHIEF SECRETARY FOR IRELAND (Mr. WYNDHAM, Dover): The discharge of prisoners committed for contempt of Court is not controlled by the Lord Lieutenant. I am informed that the Court of Chancery will at once release this woman upon her complying with its order requiring her to render an account of her dealings with the estate in question.

Evictions in County Limerick.

MR. LUNDON (Limerick, E.): I beg to ask the Chief Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland will he lay upon the Table of the House a Return for the County Limerick of the cases of eviction in that county for the past twenty-five years, as specified in the Report of the Constabulary, showing the dates of eviction, the names of the landlords and tenants respectively, and the names of the townlands on which the evictions took place.

MR. WYNDHAM: I am inquiring whether it is practicable to prepare a Return on the lines suggested, and will communicate with the hon. Member on the subject in a day or two.

MR. DELANY (Queen's County, Ossory): Will you give a similar Return for every county?

MR. WYNDHAM: That is one of the points under consideration, as if a Return is given for one county it cannot be refused for other counties.

Returning Officers' Charges.

MR. COGHILL (Stoke-upon-Trent): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether the Government intend, before a dissolution takes place, to bring in a Bill dealing with the charges at present made by returning officers at Parliamentary elections.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: The matter has not yet arisen for consideration, and I have no statement to make with regard to it.

MR. COGHILL: Will the right hon. Gentleman take into consideration the unreasonable and exorbitant charges which are often made by returning officers.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not deny that the matter is one for consideration, but my hon. friend will hardly expect me to give any pledges as regards legislation, not, of course, in the present session, but even in the next session.

Redistribution of Seats.

MR. COGHILL: I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether, before a dissolution takes place, the Government will bring in and pass a Redistribution of Seats Bill.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I remember answering a Question of my hon. friend couched in very much the same terms some time ago,† and I really have not very much to add to it now. I am aware that the subject excites, and in my judgment very properly excites, great interest, inasmuch as the anomalies which at present exist in our electoral system are augmented, and seem likely to be augmented, and have already reached a point which, I think, it is impossible to justify. But I could not give, nor do I think it wise to give, any specific pledge at the present time as to whether it would be practicable in the immediate future to deal with this very difficult question. I may point out to my hon. friend that though most of us who have studied the question are quite prepared to admit the gravity of the evil, I have not yet seen a satisfactory plan for dealing with it suggested by those who have given it most attention.

Voters' Register.

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he is aware that the new register of voters will be available in London and other places, for municipal purposes, on the 1st November; and, if so, whether the Government will, before Parliament rises, introduce a Bill providing that it shall also be available for Parliamentary purposes in case of any general election taking place after the 1st of November this year.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: No, Sir. I think the programme of legislation we have already got to dispose of is sufficiently heavy. That programme is one in which the hon. Member takes a very great and active interest, and I think he can hardly expect me to add to it on his behalf.

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† See (4) *Debates*, ci., 1228.

The Shipping Agreements.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON (Dundee): I beg to ask the First Lord of the Treasury whether he can state the terms of the Resolution with regard to the Cunard agreement which he proposes to move.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I cannot at this moment.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON: I assume that the Resolution will be simply one of approval.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I will consider its exact form.

MR. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.): Will the agreement with the American syndicate also be laid on the Table of the House, and, if so, when?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: My hon. friend the President of the Board of Trade thinks it will be available to-night at the Vote Office. I think the two agreements ought to be discussed together; they form part really of one transaction.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE.

MR. BRYCE: Can the Government state in what order Report of Supply will be taken on Monday, and has the right hon. Gentleman any other information to give with regard to the course of business?

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not propose to take anything after the Committee stage of the Sugar Convention Bill to-night, which will, or ought to, involve long discussion; but there are certain formal stages which should be taken. The order of the Report of Supply on Monday will greatly depend on how far we proceed with Supply on Thursday. I shall be glad to consult those interested in the matter, so that we may turn to the very best account the hours the Standing Order gives us on the last day of Supply. In consequence of the absence of my noble friend the Under Secretary for Foreign Affairs, who is ill and unable to be in his place, it will not be possible to take the Foreign Vote on Thursday.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean): Has not some communication been made to the Parliamentary Secretary to the Treasury with regard to the order of Supply on Thursday? We all regret the absence of the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

SIR A. ACLAND-HOOD (Somersetshire, Wellington) explained the order of Supply to be taken on Thursday would be the Irish Estimates, and Class 1, Vote 12, would immediately succeed the Irish Votes. The hon. and gallant Gentleman added that the Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs expected to be back in his place on Monday, in which case the Foreign Office Vote would then come on.

MR. JOHN REDMOND (Waterford): I had hoped it might be possible to take the Irish Land Bill on Monday.

MR. A. J. BALFOUR: I do not think it would be possible to get the Bill printed with the Lords' Amendments in time for Monday. In addition to that it is necessary to take Supply on Monday if the session is to be wound up at the time fixed, and I hope that the arrangement will not be disturbed.

FRANCHISE AND REMOVAL OF WOMEN'S DISABILITIES BILL.

Order for Second Reading [this day] read, and discharged. Bill withdrawn.

WAGES BOARDS BILL.

Order for Second Reading [this day] read, and discharged. Bill withdrawn.

TRADE UNIONS AND TRADE DISPUTES BILL.

Order for Second Reading [this day] read, and discharged. Bill withdrawn.

MESSAGE FROM THE LORDS.

That they have agreed to—London Education Bill, with Amendments.

That they have passed a Bill intituled "An Act to amend Section 82 of the Bills of Exchange Act, 1882." [Bills of Exchange Act (1882) Amendment Bill [Lords].]

BILLS OF EXCHANGE ACT (1882) AMENDMENT BILL [LORDS].

Read the first time; to be read a second time to-morrow, and to be printed. [Bill 313.]

SUGAR CONVENTION BILL.

(Considered in Committee).

(In the Committee.)

[Mr. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith) in the Chair.]

Clause 1.

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.) moved the omission of the word "foreign" from line 15. He was astonished at having to make such a Motion. He could not but think that the word had crept in by mistake. If the right hon. Gentleman would at once accept the Amendment he would not develop his argument; otherwise there might be a long discussion on the point. Let the House realise the position. They were providing that direct and indirect bounties should be abolished; and under this section, by the use of the word "foreign," they were fixing the penalties which should be imposed by this country on any country which granted a bounty—direct or indirect. Let the Government remember the grounds on which the bounties had been abolished. They had been told that the bounties were immoral and subversive of free trade, and that every good principle of sound economics demanded their abolition. Yet they were forcing through the House that which allowed these nefarious practices to be carried on in the British Empire. That was the meaning of the clause. We had a world-wide Empire, and sugar was one of its most prominent products. As the Bill stood we abolished a bad practice in foreign countries. We swept Germany, France, and Holland clean, but in every colony and every British possession bounties—direct and indirect—were to be allowed to continue. That was the meaning of the clause unless the Amendment was accepted, and it was monstrous that such a proposal should ever have been submitted to the House of Commons. If bounties were bad for trade, if they were unfair, they ought to be struck out, so as to secure their abolition everywhere—wherever they existed. There was a curious history connected with the inclusion of the word "foreign" in the Bill. The noble Lord the Member for Greenwich on the previous night pressed the right hon. Gentleman to say why the policy of countervailing duties originally presented to Parliament had been abandoned. The right hon. Gentleman gave no answer.

THE PRESIDENT OF THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. GERALD BALFOUR, Leeds, Central): It has not been abandoned.

MR. LOUGH said that assertion placed the right hon. Gentleman in still another difficulty. The right hon. Gentleman had given no satisfactory explanation of the mystery, but he would now explain it. When the Bill was first brought in countervailing duties were put forward as a cure for bounties. But after that the Colonial Secretary came on the scene, and the noble Lord who represented the Foreign Office in the House stated that the countervailing duty would not be applied to the case of any British colony. But when the Bill was actually presented it was seen that the countervailing duties had entirely disappeared. That succession of events explained a great deal. They all remembered how again and again in the spring it was promised that no difficulties should be put in the way of any British colony or possession, and it was in order to carry out that policy that the word "foreign" had been introduced. If that were retained he feared we should get into difficulties with foreign Powers. Under Article 10 of the Convention it was clear that the colonies were included. They came under all the provisions of the Convention except those of Article 8, which only referred to transit, and foreign Powers would naturally expect us to fulfil the Convention, not only in our own case, but also in regard to our colonies. Remembering that we had attached a final protocol in which we announced that we would not countervail against our colonies, it was clear that the Government were plunged into a difficulty. The Powers would think that the Convention would not only apply to Great Britain, in which no sugar was produced, but that it would also apply to the British colonies in which sugar was produced. If there was to be an honest fulfilment of the agreement, the Powers must feel that it should apply to the colonies as well as to the mother country. According to the White Paper it was announced that at the last session of the Conference the system obtaining in the British colonies and in India was not inquired into, and that made it pretty clear that there would be such an inquiry at the next session. If we restricted our action under this Convention we should be guilty of a breach of faith towards the other Powers which had entered into it. Although a great point had been made that the colonies were not going to be affected, the Convention still did strike a serious blow at them, as for five years we were bound to give no preference to our colonies. Was it to be said that no bounties existed in any of our colonies? It could not, because there were already six bounty systems existent in the colonies and two in the mother country, and we were going to retain those systems while asking foreign countries to abolish theirs. Canada paid a bounty on steel, and under it the exports of steel to this country were rapidly increasing. Canada also had a sugar bounty. Could they compel her to abandon it?

MR. CHARLES DEVLIN (Galway): No, you cannot for Canada has full right to make her own fiscal arrangements.

MR. LOUGH said he agreed with that, but he would ask—Was it fair play to ask other countries to abolish bounties while these continued? Queensland, too, had a sugar bounty, while the shipping grants, railway facilities and capital expenditure in the West India Islands were also of the nature of bounties. Again, at home the sugar refiners enjoyed a bounty under the sugar duty scale, and under the Revenue Bill now before the House, a bounty was to be given on molasses. It was almost a scandal for us to claim to build up this bounty system at home and in our colonies and yet claim that foreign countries should abolish their bounty systems. It might be said that although bounties existed in Canada and Queensland we did not get any sugar from those countries. But the House could not proceed on that basis. The right hon. Gentleman had said that we had not abandoned countervailing duties. Did he still think then of resorting to them?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: Under certain circumstances.

MR. LOUGH said that if we did, the smallest duty imposed would be £7 per ton, which had already been suggested in the case of Russia, and if such a duty were imposed on Russian sugar, within three months we should be receiving large quantities of sugar from Canada and Queensland, and there were hundreds of merchants in London who would be willing to acquire sugar estates in those colonies, and thereby rapidly make a fortune. This clause accomplished a complete reversal of our commercial system. It substituted protection and colonial preference for free trade—and colonial preference of the very worst character. If we were honest in our objection to bounties, we would abolish our own while calling on foreign countries to get rid of theirs.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 1, line 15, to leave out the word 'foreign.'"—(*Mr. Lough.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'foreign' stand part of the clause."

MR. GERALD BALFOUR said the hon. Member who had expected him to jump up and accept his Amendment even before he had stated his reasons for proposing it, had evidently quite forgotten the declaration made on behalf of this country as a condition of our ratification of the Convention. He would remind him that His Majesty's Minister was instructed to declare at the time of ratification that "it is necessary to place on record that the Government of His Britannic Majesty will not consent under any circumstances to be bound to penalise bounty-fed sugar imported into the

United Kingdom from any of the self-governing British colonies," and that the British Government were not prepared to accept any reference of this question to the permanent Commission to be established under Article VII., and that His Majesty's ratification of the Convention was deposited under that explicit declaration. With the words of that declaration before the Committee, the hon. Member had chosen to assume that the Government would accept an Amendment directly in contradiction of the special instructions given to His Majesty's Minister in Brussels. Of course they could do no such thing. All the Powers understood that this declaration would be made a condition of ratification by His Majesty's Government, and therefore it was impossible to contend that there was any sort of breach of faith. It was quite true that Germany and Austria reserved liberty of action in view of that declaration.

MR. LOUGH: And Holland.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: No, not Holland. Every other Power ratified it unconditionally and with full knowledge of the declaration. There was consequently no question of a breach of faith.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON (Dundee) said the speech of the right hon. Gentleman had disclosed a still more serious aspect of the question. One of the functions of the permanent Commission was to deliver an opinion on contested questions, and in view of the fact that Germany and Austria contested our reservation in favour of the self-governing colonies, that would be a contested question on which the Commission might be called upon to pronounce an opinion. In his opinion, the Convention required us to impose countervailing duties or prohibition on all bounty-fed sugar coming from our colonies as well as from foreign countries. Ours was the only conditional ratification, and an acceptance of an offer subject to a condition did not result in a contract at all. Therefore it came to this—that there was no Convention, for how could there be a Convention accepted under a condition by one of the parties unless it could be shown that that condition was accepted by all the other parties? He contended that the sensible thing to do would be to withdraw the Bill, and to set up a new Conference in order to get a new Convention to which all parties would agree.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean) said that the Colonial Office policy in this matter had cut across the Board of Trade policy, and the result was that this Bill was now going to do exactly what Lord Herschell and his colleague, when law officers, told the Government they could not do. Did the present law officers take a different view? With regard to the declaration accompanying our ratification, that dealt solely with the case of the self-governing British colonies. But we had virtually in our power India and the Crown colonies—and possibly our protectorates. How were they affected? He did not believe the Bill had ever been thought out. The Government did not know what they were doing in using the word "foreign." What meaning did they attach to it? Did it apply to the Isle of Man or the Channel Islands, which were separate fiscal entities? Did it apply to a protectorate like Zanzibar? The decisions of the Courts of law on the definition of the word "foreign" had not been very illuminating. In one great case it was held that a foreign country was a country inhabited by foreigners. Zanzibar was certainly not inhabited by British subjects. Was it then a foreign country? In Hall's "International Law" there was a most excellent passage on the subject.

He says that—

> "Protectorates are, of course, by no means new facts, but they may be said to be new international facts. Until lately they have been exercised in places practically beyond the sphere of contact with civilised Powers. In this respect things are now totally changed, and very many questions arising out of such contact will undoubtedly, before long, press for settlement. To take but one example: are the native inhabitants of a protectorate to be regarded as subjects of the protecting State when temporarily within the territory or the protectorate of another civilized State? There can be no doubt that Germany will take the view that they are so."

And he put the case of North Borneo and said that

> "We have assumed a protectorate over that country, and in doing so we have gratuitously embarrassed ourselves by expressly recognising their independence, and by specific limitations upon our own freedom of action which are exceedingly likely to lead to difficulties with foreign Powers."

That was the opinion of one of the leading authorities on the subject. The other was the words used in the Foreign Enlistment Act of 1870. There it was defined, but not very clearly — and the ordinary British form of a definition was no definition at all, but a mere statement of some of the things which it included—

> "'Foreign State' includes any foreign prince, colony, province, or part of any province or people, or any person or persons exercising or assuming to exercise the powers of government in or over any foreign country, colony, province, or part of any province or people."

He asked the right hon. Gentleman the specific question: Is a protectorate like Zanzibar within the meaning of the word "foreign"? That simple question would be a simple test of the position of the Government.

*MR. LAWSON WALTON (Leeds, S.) said he quite agreed with the speech of the right hon. Gentleman. This question had been inadequately thought out. However that might be, the Government had reached a stage at which they had decided not to prohibit bounty-fed imports from the self-governing colonies. That was clear. The Government bound themselves not to permit any bounties to be placed upon exports from the Crown colonies. That, also, was clear. But this clause neither specified self-governing colonies nor Crown colonies. It used a phrase which had very different significations, and which created a confusion in definition which might involve the greatest difficulty. That ought to be cleared up, because in this clause the phrase used was "foreign country." Of course, they did get some help towards a definition of that expression by the negative term that neither a Crown colony nor a self-governing colony was to be a foreign country. There was a whole class of countries which might or might not be foreign, having regard to the standard by which one judged their international position. So far as the law was concerned Scotland was foreign to the English jurisdiction. The Isle of Man was a foreign country *quo ad* England. What was to be our position in regard to those Dependencies of the Crown which were not Crown colonies and which were not self-governing colonies? The right hon. Gentleman had referred to Zanzibar. Was that a "foreign country?" It was foreign for many purposes, because it had very large powers of local jurisdiction; and from a legal and international standpoint it was clearly a "foreign country." But it owed some sort of allegiance to the British Crown. Was this clause to be applied to Zanzibar and to other spheres of influence in the Continent of Africa? Was it to apply to Egypt? Egypt was not a Crown colony nor a self-governing colony. Was it to apply to the Soudan? Undoubtedly from some points of view Egypt was a Dependency of the British Crown, subject to very large powers which made it, from these points of view, not a "foreign country." He appealed to the right hon. Gentleman to give the Committee some canon of construction. He did not think there was any clause which defined the phrase "foreign country"—a phrase of enormous difficulty and complexity of shades of meaning. As the matter stood at present they did not know whether "foreign country" was used in a legal sense, a diplomatic sense, or a common sense.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON (Tower Hamlets, Poplar) said he was not prepared himself to support any Amendment to the Bill which would interfere with the fiscal freedom of the self-governing colonies, to which he attached the greatest possible importance. But the Amendment under discussion was not intended to interfere with that fiscal freedom. It was quite clear that there was very great difficulty and complexity in regard to this question of the definition of what was a "foreign country"; and he did not think that it was treating the House of Commons fairly that the Attorney-General and the Solicitor-General were not present to advise the right hon. Gentleman. He noticed that the Solicitor-General had just come into the

House, and he hoped that the right hon. and learned Gentleman would be able to answer some, at least, of the questions that had been raised during the debate by his hon. and learned friend behind him. Although he was not himself prepared to interfere with the fiscal relations between this country and the colonies, he could not understand the attitude of the right hon. Gentleman with regard to bounties. If bounties were so worked as to be injurious to the manufacturing industries of this country surely the Government ought to endeavour by negotiation to get rid of them in the colonies as well as in foreign countries. He understood the right hon. Gentleman to say that, from beginning to end, there had been no ambiguity as to the position of the Government in regard to the self-governing colonies. As a matter of fact the question of the Government giving away the position of the self-governing colonies had been raised by the hon. Member for King's Lynn, and it was only an afterthought that the Government had put in a reservation in the Protocol in order to save the situation. It was true that something was said by the British representative at an earlier stage of the proceedings, but that was not pressed, and nothing was said on the point at the time of the drawing up of the Convention. The German Government, and the other Governments concerned, were entitled to complain in regard to this matter. At any rate it was not made clear before the Convention was ratified. What the German Government said in answer to the circular paper of this Government was that "they consider they cannot attach any importance to this declaration, seeing that it was made at a time when no draft of a Convention existed, and when many remarks were made, which, in the end, have found no expression in the Convention, and are not in harmony with it. Later, however, and in fact in the final and concluding negotiations, the British delegates did not recur to that reservation." As a matter of fact it was only an afterthought that the Government made that declaration. But there was the question of the Crown colonies over which the Government have absolute and complete control; and what he wanted to know was, if the word "foreign" was left in, how that would affect the position of the Crown colonies? The Government had pledged themselves, in regard to the West Indies, to give no bounties, direct or indirect, and what was the reason for putting in "foreign" here, if the Government were going to carry out their pledges?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: The self-governing colonies.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON said that the self-governing colonies were entirely protected by the declaration, and therefore those words were not required. The Crown colonies were excluded from the purview of the Bill, and the Government pledged themselves to allow no bounties to be given in these colonies. He was perfectly sure that there would be great difficulties between the British Government and the Permanent Commission as to whether or not they were giving bounties, especially in regard to the West Indies. There were questions of bounties in regard to giving shipping subventions and grants to the central sugar factories. The right hon. Gentleman said that in case of such disputes he would be bound to accept the decisions of the Permanent Commission.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: We will be bound to take them into consideration.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: The Government would take them into consideration, but if they did not carry out these decisions the Convention would come to an end. The question was raised by the right hon. baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean, as to what was actually a "foreign country." He would ask the right hon. the Solicitor-General if he would be kind enough to give the Committee the benefit of his advice on this very specific question. If these words were left in would they include such sugar-producing countries as Egypt, and protectorates like Zanzibar and the Soudan? What was the advantage of having these words in at all? The Government had pledged themselves to penalise any country giving a direct or indirect bounty. Did that cover all cases? He could see no advantage in leaving in those words, as they were likely to lead to very serious displeasure and friction between this and foreign countries. As they were anxious that this Convention, bad as it was, should work smoothly, he trusted that the right hon. Gentleman would accept the Amendment of his right hon. friend.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE (Carnarvon Boroughs) said that they would have a right to call for another Convention in regard to the contracting parties, but not with regard to the non-contracting parties. The matter all depended on the interpretation which the Solicitor-General would put on the word "foreign." For instance, a man who settled in Uganda would not become a British subject as he would in a Crown colony or a self-governing colony after five years residence. Therefore Uganda was technically a foreign country. The Under Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs suggested that cane growing was a great possibility in Uganda. Let it be supposed that the railway which was being built by English money in Uganda carried the cane to the coast free of charge; that would be a bounty; but under the Convention the contracting parties could in that case call on this country to prohibit the importation of sugar from Uganda. Judging by the attitude of the Solicitor-General, his support of this Bill was like his support of the Irish Land Bill—exceedingly remote; but they were entitled to ask what his views were as to what the word "foreign" meant. They could not have a special interpretation of the word *ad hoc*, so to speak, for the purposes of the Convention. Did the Solicitor-General consider Uganda a foreign country? Any sort of indirect benefit given by this country to the producers of sugar in any part of the Empire might conceivably come within the meaning of the word "foreign," and would be prohibited. Apparently the colonies were to be kept by a kind of bounty-fed loyalty; but the Committee should be informed what meaning the Government attached to the word "foreign."

MR. BRYCE (Aberdeen, S.) said that the Committee were being treated most discourteously. They were being asked to legislate without being given the slightest idea of what the result of legislation would be. It was quite impossible that the Government had not an answer. Surely they had considered the questions which must arise from this Convention. If the President of the Board of Trade would not reply, he hoped the Solicitor-General would respond to the request made to him. What the Committee should know was what they were making themselves responsible for. Austria and Germany distinctly reserved to themselves, in the amplest manner, liberty to ask the permanent Commission to declare that this country was not carrying out the provisions of the Convention if any exemptions were made in favour of the colonies. In addition to the countries which had been already mentioned, he wished to add Cyprus and the Malay States, which were practically under the control of this country. Would these countries be regarded as foreign? No doubt, no one could give subsidies in Cyprus, Egypt, Zanzibar, or the Malay States against the will of this country. The Committee should be informed what they were in good faith bound to do as regarded the different countries under the control of the British Crown; and they ought to be told what case could be brought up against this country before the permanent Commission. The Committee ought to know the area to which the Convention was to apply. The speeches which had been delivered, and especially the silence of the Government, convinced him that questions of the very gravest importance were being opened up, and unless some satisfactory explanation were given he would feel bound to vote for the Amendment as a protest against the methods of concealment adopted by the Government.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR said the right hon. Gentleman had referred to the real and substantial difficulties which had arisen. To his mind the only difficulties which had been raised were entirely lawyer difficulties. None of the countries mentioned by hon. Gentlemen opposite, as to which they expressed doubt as to whether the word "foreign" would apply, were likely to export sugar to this country. The matter was not one which, from the practical point of view, it was now necessary to consider. If any such difficulty arose, it would be time enough to consider it when the permanent Commission had expressed an opinion in the sense indicated by hon. Gentlemen opposite. He did not, however, believe that any such question would arise.

*MR. LAWSON WALTON said the whole sanction behind the enforcement of this clause was a legal sanction and nothing more. The right hon. Gentleman was seeking a right to prohibit the landing of goods in a British port. How were they to test whether the order of prohibition was lawful? It could only be tested in a Court of law. Its validity could only be examined from a legal standpoint. Yet the right hon. Gentleman made light of legal difficulties. Under this section it was possible to prohibit the landing of a cargo of sugar in a British port, but unless it could be shown that the port at which the ship loaded was a port of a foreign country, the prohibition would be bad, and the immediate result would be an action against the agents of the Government. There were scores of precedents for such a suit in other Departments dealing with shipping, involving the Departments in heavy expenditure. The right hon. Gentleman seemed to have hidden his head in the sands or in sugar, for he had said he thought the difficulties apprehended in some quarters were not likely to arise because these various places, which were neither Crown colonies nor self-governing colonies, which were not foreign countries but protected states, were not producers of sugar. Was the right hon. Gentleman going to take on himself the mantle of prophecy? Was he going to predict that, under the possible stimulus given to the cultivation of sugar by improving markets, sugar was not coming from those countries?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR said what he said was that it was extremely improbable that sugar would come from those countries under a bounty.

*MR. LAWSON WALTON said he did not know. He believed in Egypt at that moment very large areas were being laid down for the cultivation of sugar. Was this experience likely to benefit Egypt? Indiarubber was now being grown in every quarter of the globe, whereas a few years ago it was grown in a very small area. If this legislation was intended to be operative the right hon. Gentleman must recognise the necessity.

MR. WHITLEY protested against the refusal of the Law Officers of the Crown to give assistance to the Committee on the point at issue. It was very unsatisfactory that these gentlemen, who were paid large salaries, did not assist, and that neither the Prime Minister nor the Colonial Secretary were present to render help. Unless they could get further answers from the Government, consideration of this matter should be postponed. He moved to report Progress.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE said he should like, in one word, to say that in the question of Egypt this difficulty was not unlikely to arise. There was an enormous amount of sugar grown there under international administrations, not under our control.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE expressed the opinion that it was positively discourteous to the House that when a number of men asked the Law Officers of the Crown for their opinion upon this particular question, which was relevant to the discussion, they should not respond. The question was, were these protectorates foreign within the meaning of the section? Was Egypt a foreign country? Was Uganda a foreign country? What about the Malay States and Sarawak? The President of the Board of Trade did not contest the point they made. All he said was, "Sufficient for the day is the evil thereof," and that when these questions arose, they could be dealt with, but everything could not be dealt with in that way. The Committee was entitled to an answer from the Law Officers of the Crown.

*MR. HERBERT SAMUEL (Yorkshire, Cleveland) pointed out that it was not impossible that this difficulty would arise very shortly in Uganda, where sugar grew wild everywhere, and where the rate of carriage down to the coast by the railway was unremunerative. If, after this Bill was passed, it was still carried at unremunerative rates, that might be held to be an indirect bounty. Again, in East Africa sugar could be grown with great ease. It had been proposed to give subsidies to ships trading with Mombasa. If that were done, and sugar were to be imported into this country by those ships, would that be held to be an indirect bounty? Because, if so, it became of great importance to know whether East Africa were a foreign country or not. Then there was the case of the Soudan, which was partly under the ægis of Egypt and partly under the ægis of England. Egypt, they had been told, in answer to a Question in that House, was a State under the suzerainty of the Turkish Empire, in British military occupation. Was that State a foreign State? and was the Soudan a foreign State? Would the Government be obliged to penalise sugar coming from the Soudan as sugar coming from a foreign country? The protected Malay States had been given as another example. In the Trade Returns those States were classed as foreign countries, and in the statistics of Singapore imports from them were regarded as foreign imports. It was surely better to settle this question at once, and the House earnestly appealed to the Solicitor-General to give his advice upon the matter.

THE SOLICITOR-GENERAL (Sir EDWARD CARSON, Dublin University) said it was not from any desire to be discourteous that he had not intervened earlier in the debate. The President of the Board of Trade had stated that the questions concerning all these countries to which reference had been made could not possibly arise for some time—until after certain judgments had been given by the tribunal set up by the Bill. As the questions were questions of the future, and depended on the view taken by the Commission, it occurred to him that in many respects it would be wiser not to express an opinion upon matters, which, if they arose in a practical form, must subsequently come before the Law Officers. However, as the Committee desired it, he would give his opinion, although, of course, it would not be binding upon either himself or anybody else, as nobody could at present foresee the circumstances or the manner in which the question would arise before the tribunal. The view he took was that the word "foreign" did include all the countries which had been mentioned. He should think there was no doubt whatever as regarded Egypt, which was still part of the Ottoman dominions. Although we had certain defined rights and other rights undefined within that country, he

did not think it could be for a moment contended—taking the Convention and the Bill—that there was any intention whatsoever to treat Egypt as other than a foreign country. The same remark applied to the Soudan. As regarded Zanzibar, the same considerations applied, because, although we had certain protectorate rights, Zanzibar was in no sense a part of His Majesty's dominions, and could not be treated in these matters otherwise than as a foreign country. As the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean, had observed, protectorates were always one of our difficulties. There were various kinds of protectorates, with different methods of government and ill-defined rights. The complexity of the question was increased by the fact that Germany took an entirely different view with regard to protectorates from that held by this country. Germany treated her protectorates as part of the German Empire, whereas we as persistently, for reasons it was not necessary to give to the Committee, had refused to regard them as part of the British dominions. While his opinion was that these protectorates would be considered as foreign countries within the meaning of this Act and under the Convention, there was at the same time this observation to be made — that in many of these protectorates we exercised absolute rights of legislation, and his own view, for whatever it was worth, was that, taking the spirit and purport of the Convention, His Majesty's Government would be bound, so far as they were able, to prevent bounties being given in those protectorates. If he was right in that view, no question as regarded prohibition would or could arise between the protectorates and this country, because if the country was prepared to prohibit and was in a position to prevent bounties being given, it would of course exercise its discretion in preventing bounties rather than in raising the question of prohibition.

MR. LOUGH thought the Committee were much indebted to the Solicitor-General, whose speech formed an agreeable contrast to everything they had previously had from the Treasury Bench. The hon. and learned Member had said that these questions would arise only when a case came before the tribunal. But that was not so. These questions would arise immediately the Bill was passed. Merchants in London would be offered 10,000 tons of sugar in some of the countries referred to, and what were they to do? How were they to know whether or not it was safe to buy? It was very necessary that these matters should be made perfectly clear. The Solicitor-General had really increased the difficulty of the Government, because he had quadrupled the number of foreign countries and had left the matter open by distinctly saying he was not to be bound by the opinion he had given.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 147; Noes, 65. (Division List No. 213.)

AYES.

Allhusen, Aug. Henry Eden
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bagot, Capt. Josceline Fitzroy
Bailey, James (*Walworth*)
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (*Manch'r*
Balfour, Rt Hn Gerald W. (*Leeds*
Balfour, Kenneth R. (*Christch.*
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Bull, William James
Campbell, J H M. (*Dublin Univ*)
Campbell, John (*Armagh, S.*)
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edward H.
Cavendish, R. F. (*N. Lancs.*)
Cavendish, V. C. W. (*Derbyshire*
Cecil, Evelyn (*Aston Manor*)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J. (*Birm.*
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J A (*Worc*
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Corbett, A. Cameron (*Glasg.*)
Corbett, T. L. (*Down, North*
Craig, Charles Curtis (*Antrim, S*
Crossley, Sir Savile
Dalkeith, Earl of
Davenport, William Bromley-
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dimsdale, Rt. Hon. Sir Jos. C.
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Faber, George Denison (*York*)
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Ed.
Fergusson, Rt Hn. Sir J. (*Man'r*
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
Flower, Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster, P. S. (*Warwick, S. W.*
Fyler, John Arthur
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Gordon, Hn. J. E. (*Elgin&Nairn*
Gordon, J. (*Londonderry, S.*)
Gordon, Maj Evans (*T'r H'ml'ts*
Gore, Hn G. R. C Ormsby-(*Salop*
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Groves, James Grimble
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Heath, James (*Staffords. N. W.*
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hogg, Lindsay
Horner, Frederick William
Howard, J. (*Midd., Tott'ham*
Johnstone, Heywood
Kenyon, Hon. G. T. (*Denbigh*
Kimber, Henry
Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm.
Law, Andrew Bonar (*Glasgow*)
Lawson, J. Grant (*Yorks., N. R.*)
Lee, A. H. (*Hants., Fareham*)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N. S.
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (*Bristol, S.*
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Francis William
Lowther, Rt. Hon. Jas. (*Kent*)
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Macdona, John Cumming
M'Iver, Sir Lewis (*Edinburgh W*
Maxwell, Rt Hn Sir H E (*Wigt'n*
Middlemore, Jn. Throgmorton
Milvain, Thomas
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Murray, Rt Hn A. Graham (*Bute*
Myers, William Henry
Nicholson, William Graham
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Palmer, Walter (*Salisbury*)
Percy, Earl
Pierpoint, Robert
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Walter R.
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Rankin, Sir James
Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
Rattigan, Sir William Henry
Reid, James (*Greenock*)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Renshaw, Sir Charles Bine
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. C. Thomson
Roberts, Samuel (*Sheffield*)
Rolleston, Sir John F. L.
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford-
Sandys, Lt.-Col. Thos. Myles
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Shaw-Stewart, M. H. (*Renfrew*)
Sinclair, Louis (*Romford*)
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, James Parker (*Lanarks.*
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (*Strand*
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Edw. Jas. (*Somerset*)
Stanley, Lord (*Lancs.*)
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Talbot, Lord E. (*Chichester*)
Taylor, Austin (*East Toxteth*)
Thornton, Percy M.
Tollemache, Henry James
Valentia, Viscount
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt. Hn Sir William H.
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Williams, Rt Hn J Powell-(*Birm*
Wills, Sir Frederick
Wilson, John (*Falkirk*)
Wilson-Todd, Sir W. H. (*Yorks.*
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (*Bath*
Worsley-Taylor, Henry Wilson
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—
Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Bayley, Thomas (*Derbyshire*)
Brigg, John
Broadhurst, Henry
Bryce, Right Hon. James
Burt, Thomas
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Causton, Richard Knight
Channing, Francis Allston

Cremer, William Randal
Crooks, William
Delany, William
Dewar, John A.(*Inverness-sh.*)
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Doogan, P. C.
Dunn, Sir William
Elibank, Master of
Fenwick, Charles
Foster, Sir Walter (*Derby Co.*
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert J.
Grant, Corrie
Griffith, Ellis J.
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Chas. Seale-
Hayter, Rt Hon Sir Arthur D.
Henderson, Arthur (*Durham*)
Horniman, Frederick John
Humphreys-Owen, Arthur C.
Hutchinson,Dr.CharlesFredk.
Hutton, Alfred E. (*Morley*)
Jacoby, James Alfred
Jones,William(*Carnarvonshire*
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (*Cornwall*
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, David
Lundon, W.
M'Arthur, William (*Cornwall*)
M'Killop, W. (*Sligo, North*)
M'Laren, Sir Charles Benj.
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Mappin, Sir Fredk. Thorpe
Moss, Samuel
Nolan,Col.JohnP.(*Galway,N.*
Nussey, Thomas Willans
Paulton, James Mellor
Priestley, Arthur
Rea, Russell
Rigg, Richard
Robertson, Edmund (*Dundee*)
Robson, William Snowdon
Rose, Charles Day
Shackleton, David James
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Spencer,RtHnC.R.(*Northants*
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Theodore C.(*Radcliffe*)
Thomas,F.Freeman (*Hastings*)
Tomkinson, James
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Ure, Alexander
Walton, J. Lawson (*Leeds, S.*)
Warner, Thos. Courtenay T.
White, Luke (*York, E.R.*)
Wilson, H. J. (*York, W. R.*)

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Lough and Mr. Whitley.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON said the Amendment he wished to move was intended to bring the language of the Bill into harmony with the declared intention of the Government. The words of the Bill were—

> "Where it is reported by the permanent Commission that any direct or indirect bounty is granted in any foreign country on the production or export of sugars, His Majesty may, by Order in Council, make a prohibition order, that is to say, an order prohibiting sugar from that foreign country to be imported or brought into the United Kingdom."

They were told by the right hon. Gentleman yesterday that it was not the intention of the Bill, and particularly of this clause, that it should apply to the parties to the Convention. The theory of the Government was that offences by the contracting parties must be dealt with by the Committee of the Convention. The words he had quoted included all foreign countries, whether parties to the Convention or not, and any foreign country was liable to have a prohibition order made against it. They were told now that contracting parties were not concerned in this proposed legislation, and that it was only to apply to non-contracting parties. The Amendment he wished to propose was to insert after "country" the words "not being a party to the Convention." Those words absolutely expressed the intention of the Government as declared by the President of the Board of Trade. This was little more than a drafting Amendment which was necessary to make the Bill consistent with the intention of the Government. He begged to move.

Amendment proposed—

> "In page 1, line 15, after the word 'country' to insert the words 'not being a party to the Convention.'" (*Mr. Edmund Robertson.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. GERALD BALFOUR said there was one case which made it undesirable to insert those words. It was true that they would not be called upon to apply the penal clause to any of the contracting States in the first instance. Of course there would have to be a conference, and what might follow upon such conference it was difficult to say. It was conceivable that the result of the conference would be that they might be called upon to levy a countervailing duty. Although he agreed that the case was extremely unlikely to arise he thought it was undesirable to tie their hands in this respect.

MR. BRYCE pointed out that this Bill did not follow closely the language of the Convention. Instead of following that language they had put in the words "direct or indirect." He understood that it would be in the power and that it would be the duty of the Government to impose prohibition against any of the contracting parties who might give bounties.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: It might be.

MR. URE (Linlithgowshire) said what was doubtful was what the procedure would be by which they were going to penalise the contracting States. If a contracting State imposed a bounty a conference would be called, but the right hon. Gentleman would say that the Convention did not leave it in doubt what the conference was to do. It was imperative that the conference should take the decision. There was only one decision which it could take if one of the contracting States imposed a bounty, direct or indirect, if they passed a Bill absolutely prohibiting sugar from any foreign State that gave a bounty. The permanent Commission could do only one thing, and that was to declare that such sugar must be excluded from this country. The circumstances did not leave it open to the permanent Commission to give any other decision, which would be absolutely ridiculous in the face of this Bill, which included all sugar which was bounty-fed in any foreign State. Unless the words suggested were added the Committee might take it as absolutely certain that the Act would apply to all the contracting parties.

MR. LOUGH said the duty of the Convention with regard to the contracting States was merely limited to making a Report which would necessitate the calling together of a new Convention. He found nothing in the Bill to sanction this. If the Amendment were put in then they would have an end of the dispute, and he appealed to the right hon. Gentleman upon this point. They would get on quicker with the Bill if he met them a little more, and he might take at least some of their recommendations. If he rejected this Amendment they would have to fall back on Article VII of the Convention, which provided —

> "This Commission shall be composed of delegates of the several contracting States, and a permanent bureau shall be attached to it.
>
> "The duties of the delegates will be:
>
> "(*a*) To pronounce whether in the contracting States no direct or indirect bounty is granted on the production or on the exportation of sugar."

That was their first duty. Then under (*c*) it was laid down—

> "(*c*) To pronounce whether bounties exist in the non-signatory States, and to estimate the amount thereof for the purposes of Article IV."

What was the difference in the direction given to the permanent Commission of its duties with regard to the contracting States and the non-contracting States. He could see no difference whatever. Under Article VII exactly the same jurisdiction was given to the Permanent Commission over the contracting States as over those outside. The Bill was drawn in that sense. The duty of the permanent Commission was to report, and the same duty was put upon them with regard to the contracting States as well as the non-contracting States. Could the right hon. Gentleman point to any phrase in the Convention which established this difference between the two States.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR said that Article VII contained these words—

> "The duty of the Commission shall be limited to findings and investigations.
>
> "The findings and calculations referred to under letters (*b*) and (*c*) must, however be acted on by the contracting States."

MR. LOUGH said he was much obliged to the right hon. Gentleman. In the paragraph he had read no distinction was drawn between the contracting and the non-contracting State. So far as that went it applied to both. Sections (*b*) and (*c*) stood in a slightly different position. This paragraph gave directions as to what was to be done in the case of (*b*) and (*c*), but it did not say that (*a*) was excluded.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR said it was excluded by implication.

MR. LOUGH agreed that the duties were limited to findings, investigations, and reports, because "calculations" did not occur until the last paragraph. The paragraph did not at all limit the duties of the permanent Commission with regard to paragraph (*a*). It simply described what they should do with regard to (*b*) and (*c*). Surely he might suggest that it was not satisfactory that the important category coming under (*a*) should be left to be settled by implication. The last paragraph left it open for him to conclude that the directions were just as wide with regard to (*a*) as to (*b*) and (*c*). Let the Government make it clear. The right hon. Gentleman was far too scrupulous in regard to this Bill. He was going too far to please foreign Powers. Let him accept this

Amendment, and they would know where they were.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON said the right hon. Gentleman told them last night more than once most distinctly that it was out of their power to insist upon sugar from non-contracting States being penalised. He had stated that the Commission might or might not have the power of penalising the sugar of one of the contracting States. That put the matter in a different position from what the right hon. Gentleman stated last night, and raised one of the most dangerous points in connection with the Convention. The whole of the sugar trade might be thrown into the hands of one or two Powers to which the Government objected. As the right hon. Gentleman had assured them that this was to apply absolutely and solely to the non-contracting States he did not understand why he refused to accept the words of the Amendment. The Government seemed rather to rejoice in the difficulties and disputes which, if the Bill was left in its present very inchoate state, would surely arise between the British Government and the Convention.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 68; Noes, 157. (Division List No. 214.)

AYES.

Bayley, Thomas (*Derbyshire*)
Brigg, John
Broadhurst, Henry
Bryce, Right Hon. James
Burt, Thomas
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Causton, Richard Knight
Cremer, William Randal
Crooks, William
Delany, William
Dewar, John A. (*Inverness-shire*
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Doogan, P. C.
Dunn, Sir William
Elibank, Master of
Emmott, Alfred
Fenwick, Charles
Foster, Sir Walter (*Derby Co.*
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert J.
Griffith, Ellis J.
Harwood, George
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-
Hayter, Rt. Hon Sir Arthur D
Henderson, Arthur (*Durham*)
Holland, Sir William Henry
Horniman, Frederick John
Humphreys-Owen, Arthur C.
Hutchinson, Dr. Charles Fredk.
Hutton, Alfred E. (*Morley*)
Jacoby, James Alfred
Jones, Wm. (*Carnarvonshire*)
Kearley, Hudson E.
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (*Cornwall*)
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lloyd-George, David
M'Arthur, William (*Cornwall*)
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Laren, Sir Charles Benj.
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Mappin, Sir Fredk. Thorpe
Moss, Samuel
Nolan, Col. John P. (*Galway, N.*
Nussey, Thomas Willans
Priestley, Arthur
Rea, Russell
Rigg, Richard
Roberts, John H. (*Denbighs.*)
Robson, William Snowdon
Runciman, Walter
Samuel, Herbert L. (*Cleveland*
Shackleton, David James
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Soames, Arthur Wellesley
Spencer, Rt Hn. C. R. (*Northants*
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Theodore C. (*Radcliffe*
Tomkinson, James
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Ure, Alexander
Walton, J. Lawson (*Leeds, S.*)
Warner, Thos. Courtenay T.
White, Luke (*York, E. R.*)
Whitley, J. H. (*Halifax*)
Wilson, H. J. (*York, W. R.*)
Yoxall, James Henry

Tellers for the Ayes—Mr. Edmund Robertson and Mr. Lough.

NOES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Allhusen, Aug. Henry Eden
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Atkinson, Right Hon. John
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bailey, James (*Walworth*)
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (*Manch'r*
Balfour, Rt Hn. Gerald W (*Leeds*
Balfour, Kenneth R. (*Christch*
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bigwood, James
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Bull, William James
Campbell, J. H. M. (*Dublin Univ*
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, R. F. (*N. Lancs.*)
Cavendish, V. C. W. (*Derbysh.*)
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Cecil, Evelyn (*Aston Manor*)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J. (*Birm.*
Chamberlain, Rt Hn J. A. (*Worc*
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Right Hon. Jesse
Corbett, A. Cameron (*Glasgow*
Corbett, T. L. (*Down, North*)
Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge
Craig, Charles Curtis (*Antrim, S*
Crossley, Sir Savile
Dalkeith, Earl of
Davenport, William Bromley-
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dimsdale, Rt. Hn. Sir Joseph C.
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Faber, George Denison (*York*)
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Ed.
Fergusson, Rt. Hn Sir J. (*Manc'r*
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
Flower, Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Philip S. (*Warwick, S. W*
Fyler, John Arthur
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Gordon, Hn. J. E. (*Elgin & Nrn*
Gordon, J. (*Londonderry, S.*)

Mr. Lough.

Gordon, Maj Evans (*Tr H'mlets*
Gore, Hn. G. R. C. Ormsby- (*Salop*
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir J. Eldon
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Groves, James Grimble
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Hall, Edward Marshall
Halsey, Rt. Hon. Thomas F.
Hamilton, Rt Hn Ld. G. (*Midd'x*
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Heath, James (*Staffords., N. W*
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hogg, Lindsay
Horner, Frederick William
Howard, J. (*Midd., Tott'ham*
Johnstone, Heywood
Kemp, Lieut.-Colonel George
Kimber, Henry
Lambton, Hon. Fredk. Wm.
Law, Andrew Bonar (*Glasgow*
Lawrence, Wm. F. (*Liverpool*
Lawson, John Grant (*Yorks. N. R*
Lee, A. H. (*Hants., Fareham*)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N. S.
Lockwood, Lieut-Col. A. R.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (*Bristol, S*
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Francis William
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas, Regl'd J. (*Portsmouth*)
Macdona, John Cumming
M'Arthur, Charles (*Liverpool*)
Maxwell, Rt Hn. Sir H E (*Wigt'n*
Middlemore, Jn. Throgmorton
Milvain, Thomas
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Murray, Rt. Hn A Graham (*Bute*
Myers, William Henry
Nicholson, William Graham
Palmer, Walter (*Salisbury*)
Percy, Earl
Pierpoint, Robert
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Walter R.
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Rankin, Sir James
Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
Rattigan, Sir William Henry
Reid, James (*Greenock*)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Renshaw, Sir Charles Bine
Renwick, George
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. Chas. Thomson
Roberts, Samuel (*Sheffield*)
Rolleston, Sir John F. L.
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sandys, Lt.-Col. Thos. Myles
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Shaw-Stewart, M. H. (*Renfrew*)
Sinclair, Louis (*Romford*)
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, James Parker (*Lanarks.*
Smith, Hn. W. F. D. (*Strand*)
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Hon. A. (*Ormskirk*)
Stanley, Edw. Jas. (*Somerset*)
Stanley, Lord (*Lancs.*)
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Stroyan, John
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Talbot, Lord E. (*Chichester*)
Taylor, Austin (*East Toxteth*)
Tollemache, Henry James
Valentia, Viscount
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt. Hn Sir William H.
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Williams, Rt Hn J Powell- (*Birm*
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wills, Sir Frederick
Wilson, John (*Falkirk*)
Wilson-Todd, Sir W. H. (*Yorks*
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (*Bath*
Worsley-Taylor, Hry. Wilson
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Anstruther.

MR. LOUGH said that on a point of order he wished to ask the Chairman to reconsider his decision that the Amendment he had put on the paper in regard to a "Surtax set up against the import" was out of order. His object was to show that a surtax was the most effective form of bounty which could be set up. If, therefore, they were getting rid of bounties, they ought to get rid of the surtax. He wanted to show by his Amendment that this provision was hostile to the general principle of the Convention itself.

*THE CHAIRMAN: If the hon. Member will look at Article I of the Convention he will find amongst the definitions of what are, and what are not bounties—

> "Advantage derived from any surtax in excess of the rate fixed by Article III."

I need not go into the Article III, but if the hon. Member's Motion is to the same effect then it is not necessary; and if it proposes something different from that, it is outside the Convention.

MR. LOUGH asked if it would not be in order to raise the point that a certain surtax allowed by the Convention was the most noxious form of bounty that existed.

*THE CHAIRMAN: What the hon. Member proposes to do is to turn the Convention upside down and make the Convention his own. He must start with the assumption that the House has accepted the Convention, and that we are now engaged in carrying that Convention through.

MR. BRYCE asked if the Committee were to understand that all things in the nature of a definition, to be found in the Convention, were practically imported into the Bill, and that the Bill was to be interpreted by what was in the Convention.

*THE CHAIRMAN: I think that is so. The object of this Bill is simply to carry out the Convention, and if there is a definition in the Convention the Committee must accept that definition.

MR. BRYCE asked if there ought not to be a means of ascertaining what was the meaning attached by the Government to the terms of the Convention which were open to question ?

*THE CHAIRMAN: The Committee has accepted the Convention, and has taken it with all its imperfections on its head. It is impossible now to go back and say that we do not approve of it because it is not sufficiently definite. We ought to take it or leave it.

MR. BRYCE said that what he meant was that they should be at liberty to move any Amendment which would not contravene any part of the Convention, but that they should get at the meaning of the Government in regard to the Convention. They were making the Convention part of the law of England, and they ought to have some means of knowing what the Convention really implied.

*THE CHAIRMAN: If the proposed Amendment simply carries out what is contained in the Convention, then it is unnecessary; but if it implies a definition leading to a different conclusion than that in the Convention, it is outside the scope of the Bill.

MR. KEARLEY (Devonport) said he wished to propose an Amendment on Clause 1, page 1, line 16, to insert after "sugars" the words "or sugared goods." On the previous night they on that side of the House had put forward the case that if the Bill were to be a complete Bill it ought to incorporate the Convention itself. That was declined although no argument was given. The first part of the sub-section stated that if any direct or indirect bounty was granted in any foreign country for the production or export of sugars, something was to take place. As the Bill stood it dealt with sugar, and sugar only; but, as the House knew, sugar products—that was to say, goods which contained a large or small percentage of sugar—would not be excluded from importation from bounty-giving countries. That would have an effect on our manufacturers. We should be excluding the raw materials on which our industries had been built up, and on the other hand we should be allowing to enter into competition with those articles foreign manufactured articles, bounty-fed. Was that the intention of the right hon. Gentleman ? The Convention, according to Article I, stated that the high contracting parties engaged to suppress direct and indirect bounties by which the production or exportation of sugar might profit, and not to establish bounties of such a kind during the whole continuance of the Convention. For the appplication of this provision sugar-sweetened products, such as preserves, chocolates, biscuits, condensed milk, and all other analogous products containing in a notable proportion artificially incorporated sugar, were assimilated to sugar. He therefore maintained that the Bill as it stood was against the expressed provision of Article I of the Convention. Unless the words he moved were inserted in the Bill our manufacturers would be at a considerable disadvantage in the open markets of the world. He begged to move.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 1, line 16, after the word 'sugars,' to insert the words 'or sugared goods.'"—(*Mr. Kearley.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. GERALD BALFOUR said that to accept these words was to go beyond the provisions of the Convention. The hon. Member had referred to Article I, and he quoted the words at the end of the first paragraph of that article; but he would call attention to the fact that these words were expressly confined to the provisions of Article I. They did not apply to Article IV nor to Article VIII, both of which only referred to sugar and not to sugar products. If he were to accept this Amendment and insert "sugared goods" he should be absolutely going beyond the provisions of the Convention.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON said that the right hon. Gentleman was beginning to alarm him. This was the most confused Convention that ever a set of mad diplomatists ever made, and this was the most confused Bill ever submitted to this House. He never dreamt, before the right hon. Gentleman spoke, but that he was going to say that the word "sugar" included "sugar products." Now it seemed that the discrimination between sugar and sugar products was deliberate and intentional, and the effect would be that the bounty-fed sugar which had given to the manufacturers of this country such an advantage would be excluded, and that the same sugar would be put into the protected manufactures in bounty-giving countries which would come over here and drive our manufactures out of the market most effectually. He maintained that that was perfectly monstrous. The Colonial Secretary jeered about jam and pickles. [GOVERNMENT Cries of "Hear, hear."] At all events the jam and pickle interest of the Empire was stronger than that of the sugar-refining interest, and that was the interest at which they were dealing a blow. He regretted more than ever that the Committee was not able to enforce on the Government the Amendment compelling them to put the Convention as a schedule into the Bill which they were now seeking to pass as the law of the land. They were in this difficulty—that the Chairman had ruled that any Amendment was out of order which did not carry into effect the Convention. He thought that that ruling should apply to both sides. He disputed altogether the interpretation which the right hon. Gentleman had put on the provisions of the Convention. Article I, which was the governing provision, and which applied to the whole Bill, said that there was to be a suppression of all bounties, direct and indirect. Would it be stated in any Bill passed through this House that the word "sugar" included sugar products?

MR. BRYCE asked what meaning the President of the Board of Trade attached to the words "assimilated to sugar"?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR said he would refer the right hon. Gentleman to a passage on page 184 of the *procès verbal*, from which it appeared, not only from the text of the Convention but also from what passed during the discussion, that the assimilation of sugar products applied to Article I, and to Article I only.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON said that in that case the meaning of the Bill was that bounties were to be stopped not only in connection with sugar but also in connection with sugar-sweetened products. The paragraph to which the right hon. Gentleman had referred the Committee did not impress him as improving the right hon. Gentleman's point. He would, however, assume it did, and all he would say about it was that this monstrous Convention and this monstrous Bill were worse than the House supposed on the Second Reading.

* MR. LAWSON WALTON said he felt sure that the right hon. Gentleman must yield at last to the importunities addressed to him to introduce some explicitness into the vague proposals of the Bill. He confessed that he had not previously noticed the somewhat extraordinary language in the preamble of the Bill. It was now clear, although it had not been previously clear, that the Convention was incorporated in the Bill. The preamble stated that His Majesty had entered into a Convention; and it was to be enacted that it was expedient to give effect to it by legislation. The whole of the provisions of the Bill must therefore be construed as being subordinate to the terms of the Convention. If the Committee were to pass the clause they were now discussing, which gave the Government power to prohibit the importation of sugar, the question arose in what sense the word "sugar" was to be interpreted. Article I contemplated this very difficulty; and indicated in perfectly clear language that sugar was to be taken not merely as sugar in a raw state, but sugar which had entered into the composition of other articles. It was perfectly clear that the policy contemplated was not to be limited to the discontinuance by each country of the practice of feeding the manufacture of sugar by means of bounties; it was also to prevent the importation by other countries of bounty-fed sugar. In other words, the policy was that the contracting countries should not only not give bounties themselves but should suppress bounties in other countries, either by prohibition or countervailing duties. It might possibly be contended that the word "sugar" should be differently

construed in Article I., and in Articles IV. and VIII., and if a Court of law had to construe the Act, it would be limited to the words of the Convention itself.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR said that if any question of doubt arose, reference might be made to the *procès verbal.*

***MR. LAWSON WALTON** said he did not agree. This was to be an Act of Parliament which the Courts would have to construe, and on the interpretation of which important private rights depended; and he said, without the smallest fear of contradiction from any lawyer in the House, that if the Act came up for interpretation by any Court of law, regard would be had only to the terms of the Act itself construed in connection with the language of the Convention. In Article I. they got the clearest possible indication not only of what sugar was but of the policy to which effect was to be given by the Convention. That policy was to crush the system of feeding sugar by bounties, and not only sugar itself but sugar which was embodied in other products. For the purposes of this provision sugar included products of which sugar formed a notable proportion. The right hon. Gentleman did not give a single argument to show why a distinction should be drawn between sugar to be exported as such and sugar which was to be used in the manufacture of biscuits, chocolates, and other commodities. Certainly the Convention drew no such distinction. The right hon. Gentleman said that the word "sugar" in Articles IV. and VIII. did not mean sugar-sweetened articles; but in construing Articles IV. and VIII. it would be necessary to look back on Article I., which stated that sugar was to be taken as including sugar products. As the Bill stood it would be certain to lead to the greatest confusion, because it embraced two distinct definitions of the commodity to which it referred. In such a state of confusion a case for a definition clause had been amply made out. If ever there was a Bill which was ambiguous it was the measure now before the Committee, and surely a clause was required to remove ambiguity and to throw light on its dark places. There were two or three distinct views as to what the word "sugar" meant; and the Committee ought to have some authoritative opinion on the subject.

SIR SAMUEL HOARE (Norwich) said he wished to express the hope that his right hon. friend would see his way to modify the wording of the Bill in order that the difficulty referred to might be removed. He confessed he himself, as one who had taken a great interest in the matter, had been puzzled by the wording of the Convention. He looked very carefully at the phraseology; and it conveyed to him that sugar did include sugar-sweetened products, and that that Convention did not merely refer to the production of sugar itself. He had supported this Bill because as a very strong free trader he was opposed to bounties of every kind. He thought this Bill was going to stop bounties, but if there was this uncertainty about this point that would not be the result of the Convention, because these sugar-sweetened commodities would come in free. For instance, the greater proportion of chocolate was sugar, and in bounty-giving countries they might think it would pay them better to manufacture their sugar into chocolate. He expressed the hope that this matter might be made quite clear. It must be made clear that if they were to penalise those countries that gave bounties on sugar they would not allow them to enter into free competition with the manufacturers of this country, with these sugar sweetened commodities of which sugar formed the chief part.

MR. BRYCE said they had often heard complaints of the obscurity of the statutes of this country and the vagueness of their drafting, but the worst drawn statute ever passed by the House was lucidity itself as compared with this Bill. As he understood, the view of the Government was that Article I. was to be read in such a way that the term sugar was to mean sweetmeats, chocolates, biscuits, condensed milk and all analogous products, but that that definition was to be strictly confined to Article I. and did not apply to the other Articles of the Convention. Article IV. applied to sugar alone. There were two ways of stopping bounties, one by preventing the importation of goods into the country, and the other by imposing countervailing duties on bounty-fed sugars. This was not a Bill for the suppression of sugar bounties at all. It was a Bill for changing the form in which bounties were to be given. The bounty on sugar was to be turned into a bounty on sugar-sweetened goods which might still be bounty-fed. Nothing in the Convention prevented it. When they had to deal with any of the contracting States they relieved them from the only kind of pressure that could be applied, and as regards the non-contracting States the Convention was not worth the paper it was written upon. With regard to the non-contracting States Article IV. was of no effect at all. This Bill took the bounty from a branch of industry which did not affect Great Britain, and put it on a branch of industry that did affect Great Britain very largely, by bringing into competition with the manufacturers of this country, who would have to buy dear raw material, articles similar to those which they manufactured which might be bounty-fed. He was astonished at the number of faults that obtruded themselves in every line of this Convention, and he was astonished that the Government did not share in the demand that it should at least be intelligent.

MR. LLOYD-GEORGE said he could hardly believe the right hon. Gentleman had contemplated the evil that was being done. He believed the intention of all those who were present at the Convention was that these sugar-sweetened articles should be included in the definition of the word "sugar." The Convention was fearfully and wonderfully made. It was a Convention to benefit France at English expense. He was told that the profit on a pound of sugar manufactured into preserve was equal to the profit of fifty pounds of sugar dealt with in the sugar refineries. Sugar refineries in this country only employed 2,500 men, and under the Convention they might employ another 1,000, but those employed in other industries affected by this Convention, excluding the manufacturing of biscuits, were nearly 100,000. It was almost incredible that such a project should be seriously placed before the House of Commons for acceptance. This was a Bill, not for the suppression of bounties, but for the encouragement of foreign industries and the discouragement of British industries. It was the first example, out of a bulk, of the great new fiscal policy by which the drooping British industries were to be regenerated. The only thing to be introduced was glucose—that went into beer and was to be encouraged. The new policy, therefore, was one of cheap beer and dear jam. It was hardly to be believed that the Government had contemplated the possibility of these things happening. The right hon. Gentleman had said that the proposals applied only to non-contracting States. But some of the contracting parties were guilty of giving bounties, and they would help each other to evade the Convention. The effect of the Convention would be to exclude raw material which would be useful to us, and to allow bounties to be given upon manufactures which would shut out our products and make it difficult for us to compete in neutral markets. It was almost inconceivable that any Government in its senses could have done anything of the sort. The Government had been advised by only two experts, of whom one was engaged in sugar refining and the other in West Indian cane; they had been taken in by everybody; they had exercised no judgment, discretion, or knowledge; and they had shown a simplicity beyond belief. The position of the Government was that they had accepted the Convention, and could therefore do nothing. He suggested that they should allow the House of Commons to impose its will upon them; they would then be relieved of responsibility, and no blame could be placed upon them by the other contracting parties.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES (Lynn Regis) said the whole of the Convention rested on the basis of sugar products being included under the denomination of "sugar." It was easy to see how the Government had got into their present mess. They first of all got into a difficulty over the self-governing colonies, and got out of it by a repudiation before the Convention was ratified. The mess they were now in was that if they were to carry out the Convention they would have to include all products into which sugar entered, which, according to our Customs tariff, would mean the inclusion of blacking, rose petals, violet leaves, and Angostura bitters. Surely, since the Bill was a violation of the Convention, it ought to be withdrawn. With regard to indirect bounties the Government proposed to carry out the Convention, and, no matter how remote, given a direct payment, the bounty might be, prohibition was to be applied. The right hon. Gentleman has stated that this unfortunate state of affairs could arise only in regard to non-contracting States. But that did not make it any the more just; it made it the more supremely ridiculous. If a non-contracting State gave a bounty on sugar or chocolate or biscuits, nothing short of prohibition would suffice, whereas if all the sugar was put into biscuits it could be imported to the extent of millions of tons without the imposition of countervailing duties, prohibition, or anything else. That was the absolute destruction of the Convention. The right hon. Gentleman positively proposed to stand in the ports and, in the case of a non-contracting State giving bounties, sternly to reject, as though it were false money or obscene books, every pound of sugar that might be sent, but if the sugar was sent in the form of biscuits, chocolate, blacking or Angostura bitters, it would be admitted without question. That was an absolute fraud on the States which had signed the Convention, and it was a greater violation of the agreement than the repudiation concerning the self-governing colonies, because in this case, after the Convention had been signed and a Bill introduced into Parliament, the Government had the unparalleled assurance to avow to the House of Commons that they did not mean to carry it out. That was what it really came to, and it could hardly be supposed that the contracting States would be satisfied with such a position.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE asked the right hon. Gentleman to what document he was referring when he directed the attention of the Committee to a discussion which had taken place on this subject.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR was understood to say that it was the report of the proceedings of the Conference at Brussels.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE said that those documents had not been laid before Parliament, and he believed there had never been an instance of such negotiations leading to such a Convention where the protocols and the *procès verbaux* of the whole proceedings had not been laid before Parliament. The documents which had been placed in the Library were the *procès verbaux* of the later sittings. In his opinion the reason why these documents had been concealed from Parliament was, that whereas the Government had argued that by their policy they had imposed a certain line on the other Powers, it was perfectly notorious that the whole desire for the abolition of bounties came from France and Germany, who had put their heads together, settled a policy and imposed it upon our Government. The *procès verbaux* had been kept back, a proceeding for which there was no precedent in connection with any such negotiations.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES reminded the Committee that he had appealed to the right hon. Gentleman to lay these documents on the Table, especially as he had stated that the Convention was to be construed by the *procès verbaux*.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE said the hon. and learned Member for Leeds had laid it down—and he believed it to be good law—that the Courts of law would be driven by the words of this statute to the Convention, and the Government had declared that the Convention was to be interpreted by the *procès verbaux*, which had not been laid before Parliament. The document which had been laid before Parliament was a most foolish Blue-book, consisting for the most part of votes of thanks from the West Indian Colonies to the Secretary of State for the Colonies.

As the hon. Member for King's Lynn had pointed out, they were obliged to surround their sugar duties with a perfect maze of duties upon all manufactured products into which sugar entered. In the Conference at Brussels those great British interests of jam and biscuit making into which sugar entered were not properly represented. Therefore as there was nobody to advise the Conference the interests of those industries had gone by the board. There was one other matter which had not been mentioned in connection with this subject, and to which attention must be called in the future. Various forms of preserved milk from abroad were competing with milk at home. This was very serious indeed, and the British farmer would not be pleased to find that the introduction of sweetened milk would be encouraged by foreign bounties while the Government were professing to destroy bounties by this Bill.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON said they had certainly been very much astonished by the statement which had been made by the President of the Board of Trade, because he did not think there was a single hon. Member, when this question was first raised, who was not convinced that sugar meant also sugared goods. While they were to prohibit bounty-fed sugar they were prevented from penalising the bounty-fed products. The right hon. Gentleman said that this only applied to the contracting States. What fell from the hon. member for King's Lynn was very much to the point, because in this matter they were making their Convention with the contracting States on the supposition that they were all going to relinquish something for the common good, but they were going to give the other States an advantage in this branch of their work. He wished to know what would be the position of Italy, for she was a sort of semi-contracting State, and she did not come under the Convention until she began to export sugar. When Italy began to export sugar she would then become a party to the Convention. It was quite clear that in Article VI. the word "sugar" meant sugar and not sugared goods. Italy was one of their great competitors, and the result was that one of the contracting Powers would be practically able to export bounty-fed sugared goods in competition with those manufactured in this country. In Switzerland bounty-fed sugar was to be allowed to go in transit. In Switzerland sugar was used largely in milk and other confections in competition with this country. Bounty-fed sugar could go to Switzerland, where it could be made into sugared products and then come into competition with the English markets, and those goods could not be prohibited under the Convention. Take the case of Austria-Hungary. It was quite clear that they did not intend bringing their legislation in accordance with the Convention, and therefore they would be a non-contracting State.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: In to-day's papers there is a telegram stating that Austria-Hungary has brought her legislation into harmony with the Convention.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: Have His Majesty's Government themselves information to that effect?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR: No, but we have had every reason to believe that Austria-Hungary would bring her legislation into accordance with the Convention.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON said that at all events the question might arise with regard to France. It was very likely that France might find she was not able to bring her drawback into accordance with the Convention, and she would then go out of the Convention, and compete unfairly with our manufacturers with her bounty-fed sweetmeats. As his hon. friend the Member for Norwich had said, this was a serious matter for the manufacturers of sugared goods. Under this Convention the cost of production of these goods would be raised, because they would have to pay more for sugar, while the foreigner, under the Convention, would pay less, because the price of sugar abroad would be lower, whilst in this country it would be increased. Under the Convention, as the right hon. Gentleman interpreted it, there would be this bounty-fed competition in the markets in which the cost of production had already been raised. The additional competition for these goods would be very severe indeed. He had several of those manufacturers in his own constituency, and there were many others in London who employed a very large number of men and women, and at present their margin of profits was very small, but under this Bill that margin would entirely disappear. They were going to have under the guise of this Convention and free trade this unfair competition. The difficulty in carrying out this Act was to define what was sugar and what was sugared goods. That would lead to considerable difficulty. The fact was that the right hon. Gentleman declined to accept any Amendment, however reasonable and however likely to improve the position of the country, because the Government had determined not to have a Report stage. He hoped the Government would reconsider their position and make some statement that they would exercise their own judgment and penalise sugared goods as much as they penalised sugar, because if they did not do so they would be doing a very serious injury to those particular trades.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR said that his hon. friend the Member for King's Lynn, who had accused the Government of a gross breach of faith towards the other contracting Powers, was not in the House when he explained why he could not accept the Amendment. He then pointed out that the Convention itself drew a distinction between sugar to which sugared products were assimilated for the purposes of Article I., whereas in the other Articles sugar alone was mentioned. To convince the Committee that that was not an unintentional oversight, he quoted certain words from the *procès verbaux.* He was very sorry if those *procès verbaux* had not been laid on the Table, but he was bound to say that he thought the attention of his noble friend the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs ought to have been called to it.

MR. LOUGH: I asked the noble Lord twenty times.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR said that the Amendment could not be accepted, because it would distinctly go beyond the Convention in a Bill, the object of which was to give effect to that Convention. Before the Convention it was open to any countries giving bounties to give them on the production or export of sugared products, and it was still open to the non-contracting States to do so; but the effect of the Convention as regarded the contracting States was to prevent them from giving such bounties. But then it had been said that the contracting states instead of importing sugar into this country would import sugar products, and that their attention would be turned to sugar-made articles rather than to the manufacture and export of sugar itself. He was bound to say he did not think that was a very serious danger at the present time. The only countries where that was at all likely to occur were Russia and Switzerland. Russia would have to create an industry in sugar products in order to export them in such a way as to injure the manufacturers of chocolate in this country. In the case of Switzerland that country would be in no better position with the Convention than before. It was perfectly true that hon. Members opposite took it for granted that our confectioners would have to pay more for the sugar which they used in their industry than they did now. He very much doubted, as he had already explained to the House at great length, whether that would be the case, and therefore he did not entertain the apprehension which had been so freely expressed by Gentlemen on the Benches opposite. The hon. Member opposite was absolutely wrong in saying that confectioners would be worsened rather than improved by the provisions of the Convention with respect to the surtax. The Convention with respect to the surtax would reduce any possible advantage the home producer might have over the foreign importer to a maximum of six francs in the case of refined sugar, and five francs fifty centimes on unrefined sugar. The result of that would be, he believed, that our sugar products would find a freer entry into the contracting States than they had hitherto done. Certainly the import of the articles into the contracting States would not be rendered more difficult. He granted it was conceivable that danger might arise, such as the hon. Member for Norwich laid great stress upon, and that we might find in future our confectionery and jam manufactures, and so forth, exposed to unfair competition. He said distinctly on behalf of the Government that if that was to occur they should certainly be prepared to consider the suggestion of the hon. Member for Poplar that, outside of any Bill for carrying into effect the provisions of the Convention, they should take such precautions as might be necessary to prevent injury to the trades concerned. It would be wrong in his judgment to insert in a Bill which was to give effect to the Convention provision against a danger which the Convention did not contemplate.

MR. ROBSON (South Shields) said the contracting States seemed to have so framed this Convention that no penalty should be attached to the export of bounty-fed products. The danger arose in the non-contracting States who were likely to disregard this arrangement. It was quite clear that this country would not gain by it. They were now to have dearer sugar in this country, so that the German manufacturer of chocolate, confectionery, or biscuits would no longer have this country bountied against himself. He would be in a better position for competition with this country, because owing to the absence of supervision over his manufactures he would be able to get an exaggerated drawback, or, in other words, he would really get a bounty. It was almost impossible, as fiscal experience showed, to prevent drawbacks from becoming exaggerated. It would seem as if the Commission had carefully excluded sugar productions from the provisions of the Convention, and therefore, if a bounty were placed on chocolate or any confectionery there would be apparently no remedy. So far as he could see this country must appeal in vain to the Commission. Even if the Commission took up the appeal, and reported that one of the contracting States was guilty of giving a bounty there would be no remedy, There was no penalty, so that, if the Convention stood as it was, the Government would be transferring the attack which they said was being made upon the sugar refining industry of this country to all other industries that used sugar as a raw material. It was not a suppression at all, but a mere transfer of the attack. Such slipshod legislation ought not to be adopted when they were dealing with the interests of the people. It was not for the President of the Board of Trade to get up and say, "It may be that this legislation will be detrimental to some of our great industries, but the moment it turns out to be so we will deal with it in this House." It was not right that the Board of Trade should subject the industries which were so much greater than those they were seeking to protect to the danger which would be brought about by this Bill. The right hon. Gentleman ought either to reconsider his position or adopt some attitude like Austria-Hungary and thus relieve this country from the present position. He hoped it would be clearly understood that the Government were undoubtedly interfering with a great trade, preventing the free course of commercial desires and tendencies, and were not really achieving the benefit they had promised by suppressing bounties.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR said that as an attack had been made on him and the Under-Secretary for Foreign Affairs for not having provided hon. Members with copies of the *procès-verbaux*, he might say that the Solicitor-General for Scotland had just been to the Library and found two copies of the *procès-verbaux* there.

MR. HARWOOD (Bolton) said he wanted to reduce this matter to a practical point. In his constituency there were a large number of manufacturers who used sugar, and he had the duty of meeting them to-morrow to explain this Bill. Though he found it extremely difficult to keep his blood cool over this abominable measure he did not wish to be unfair. Most of those whom he was to meet used bounty-fed sugar and they would probably ask him "supposing a cargo of bounty-fed sugar arrives in the Mersey and the Government follows its principle of prohibition, that would have to be cast into the sea, but supposing a cargo of sugar goods comes to the Mersey, are the importers to be quite free to come into competition with us?" His constituents complained that they would suffer from a double drawback—that they would be deprived of the advantage of cheap bounty-fed sugar as raw material, and that they would be put into competition with bounty-fed sugar products. The Government did not think that that would be the case, but the Government had not shown conspicuously great prescience or prophetic gift. It was a very small comfort for an hon. Member to take back to his constituents that the right hon. Gentleman had said that the Governwould take into consideration the advisability of meeting their views. He was afraid that his constituents would have to wait until the Greek Kalends, or in the meantime to go through the Bankruptcy Court.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES said that he did not think that the right hon. Gentleman had appreciated the meaning of the document he had quoted. The right hon. Gentleman now said that Article 1 only applied to the contracting States, and not to the non-contracting States, and he fortified himself by quoting from *procès-verbal.*

MR. GERALD BALFOUR said he quoted the *procès-verbal* to show that it had been clearly stated by the permanent Commission that the definition of sugar products applied to Article I.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES said that it was clear from the *procès-verbal* that every member of the permanent Commission intended that sugar products should not be bounty-fed any more than sugar. Anything else would be nonsense. He wanted to bring this matter to a definite issue. The right hon. Gentleman knew that he had been already denounced by Russia as a violater of the most-favoured-nation clause. With regard to the declaration made when he ratified the treaty, he was told by Austria, by Germany and by France that they entirely disagreed with his view of his obligation, and that they held themselves perfectly free to take such retaliatory action as they considered necessary. Had the right hon. Gentleman communicated this entirely novel view—novel to him, and certainly novel to the President of the Conference which he had sprung on the House of Commons — to the other contracting parties? Was there any answer to that? The right hon. Gentleman made no answer. He maintained that unless the right hon. Gentleman had done that, and had received the aquiescence of the other contracting parties to this non-natural view of the Convention, it was not fair or right to come to this House and ask to apply the prohibition to the contracting States, and leave the non-contracting States free. To ask them to believe that the penalties were not to apply to the sugar products of the non-contracting States was a mockery; it was making fun of the House of Commons. Again he put the question: "Did the contracting parties take the same view as the right hon. Gentleman held, that all sugar products were to be admitted free, if they were bounty-fed?" Had the right hon. Gentleman had any communication with the foreign Governments in regard to that point? He imagined not; he was sure not; he was quite certain not. The right hon. Gentleman's silence convinced him that he had not more than a most eloquent statement. The position taken by the right hon. Gentleman was humiliating to the Government, discreditable, and contrary to all good faith with the contracting States.

MR. EMMOTT (Oldham) said that the opinion of the hon. Member for King's Lynn was in agreement with the interpretation made by the high legal authority of the hon. Member for Leeds. The right hon. Gentleman, the President of the Board of Trade, took an entirely different view. This again raised a point, why were not the Law Officers of the Crown there? No end of time was being wasted, because the Committee could not get any proper legal opinion from the responsible legal advisers of His Majesty's Government. If the President of the Board of Trade was right in his interpretation, the situation was of the utmost importance. Great businesses had sprung up and grown in this country under the stimulus of cheap bounty fed sugar. They were doing much to endanger the prosperity of these industries by raising the price of sugar, as he believed they would do under the Convention. But they were now going to make the position worse, because they were going to enable non-contracting States to import into this country confectionery, jam, and other things made from bounty-fed sugar. He thought that this was the most anti-English Bill that had ever been introduced into the House of Commons. Some hon. Members opposite wanted what they called fair trade. Were they going to get fair trade under this Bill? This was the first fruits of the new retaliatory policy. They were not only going to raise the price of the raw materials by this Convention, and so handicap our own industries, but to encourage competition by foreign countries on an utterly unfair basis. They were going to condemn one kind of "dumping" which had paid us, and to encourage another kind of "dumping" which was detrimental. If the House of Commons was going to pass a Bill like this it was unworthy of the confidence of the nation.

SIR JOHN GORST (Cambridge University) said the discussion this afternoon had been interesting and instructive. It had taught the House of Commons, as well as some members of the Government, what happened when they interfered with the natural course of trade. He thought the Government must be convinced that they could not possibly maintain the position they had taken up. They might bring in their supporters from the lobbies and smoking rooms and defeat the Amendment, but they must see that the Amendment was absolutely necessary. Two questions were involved. The first was were they bound by the Convention to prohibit the importation of sugar-sweetened articles? He should take the view of his hon. friend the Member for King's Lynn that the first Article governed the whole thing, and that Clause 4 applied equally to sugared articles as to sugar. The President of the Board of Trade, whether advised by the law officers or not, thought otherwise. Suppose the right hon. Gentleman was right, the terms of the Convention did not prevent Parliament from passing such an Amendment as this, which was quite in consonance with all the terms of the Convention. They had a perfect right to do so if they liked. The power of the House of Commons was not quite curtailed by the Convention at Brussels. Was it desirable to give the Government this power? It had been shown that the British producer of sugared articles, after this Convention was enforced, would be in a very inferior position to his foreign competitors. In the case of the familiar example of Switzerland, although the conditions of the producer of condensed milk in Switzerland would not be altered, the condition of the British producer would be altered, because while the Swiss producer could get bounty-fed sugar from Russia, his British competitor would have to obtain his sugar at the price fixed by the Convention. If that was the case why should not the Government take in the present Bill a power to prohibit sugared articles. What harm was there in that? The right hon. Gentleman had said if the prognostications of so many hon. Members were right, he would come to the House later and ask for powers. Why should he not take the powers now? The Government then would have all the powers necessary, and they could at once say sugared articles should be prohibited. Time could be saved if the Government were now to accept an Amendment which might be necessary to carry out the terms of the Convention; which was not, at all events, opposed to the Convention, and which was necessary to protect the British manufacturer of sugared articles from unfair competition.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE pointed out that this very matter was discussed at the twelfth sitting of the Convention on the 20th of June, at great length, in connection with the "certificate of origin," when it was proposed on behalf of all the contracting Powers except Great Britain that there should be words put into the "certificate of origin" which would have specifically dealt with this question of sugared articles, and the very instance brought forward on that occasion was the case of Switzerland. The words proposed to be put in were that the same description was to apply to sugared products. But Sir Henry Bergne, on behalf of Great Britain, expressed the opinion that no special words should be put in, and said it would be better to leave to the various contracting Powers the power to take those measures which each should think necessary from the point of view of the interests of their own trade. So that Sir Henry Bergne had evidently foreseen the very Amendment upon which they were engaged that afternoon. It was true that he had rather given the case away afterwards because he went on to say it would be better to leave the questions provisionally open until the month of October next, when they would be able to see what the difficulties were found to be in practice, and then the Commission would be able to see what measures it would be necessary to take to remedy them. That was quite a different proposal, and therefore he had thought it right to mention it, but the first proposal of Sir Henry Bergne was that each Power should deal with this question.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON said he should like an answer to the Question he had previously put in the form of a statement. Italy was not at present a contracting power. She would become a contracting power when she was in a position to export sugar. But supposing she exported sugared goods and not sugar, did she become a contracting State? If she did not there was nothing to prevent her giving large bounties on sugared articles and entering into unfair competition with home manufactured goods.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR replied that the question was one for the decision of the International Commission.

MR. BRYCE said the Committee ought to know what the effect of its legislation was going to be. They wanted to know now what they were committing the country to, and they were entitled to some expression of opinion on the part of the Government.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR thought the right hon. Gentleman was somewhat unreasonable. The Convention left a great many matters to settle, and the right hon. Gentleman was now asking the Government to say beforehand what the findings of the Commission would be.

MR. LOUGH asked whether under those circumstances it would not be better to leave the whole thing to the Commission, and not to pass this Bill through the House? If the right hon. Gentleman did pass the Bill it ought to be a complete Bill, and an intelligent Bill, which our merchants could understand. If, after the explanations which had taken place, the Government proceeded any further with this Bill, they would give one of the most disastrous blows to British commerce that had been given to it for many generations. It was all very well for learned Members of the House to translate the Articles of Convention to the House, but he claimed that the Articles of Convention were not before the House until they were printed in English. He would not be surprised himself if the right hon. Gentleman the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who he noticed was now present, was not at the bottom of all this difficulty, because if all these sugared articles were included in the definition of the word sugar a large number of factories and warehouses which were now free would have to be bonded. It was this difficulty of bonding the warehouses which had made the Government cut the Gordian knot by saying that all sugared products of this country were not going to be scheduled as sugar, he would ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer was it right to put these prohibitive provisions on raw material and allow the manufactured article to come in free? Generally speaking, the exactly opposite principle was adopted. If that was intended it was a monstrous thing.

*THE CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER (Mr. RITCHIE, Croydon) said what the proposal would seem to involve was the placing the manufacture of all these products in this country in bond. However, he expressed no decided opinion. He did not believe there was the slightest probability of bounty-fed sugared products being imported. Certainly they could not come from any of the countries that were parties to the Convention. Then the question arose whether some of the other countries might not by means of bounty-fed sugar make these products and export them to this country. He did not believe there was the slightest probability of anything of the kind happening, but if it did then the Government would at once take action in order to prevent it. They did not want to put all the manufacturing trades in this country who made articles composed mainly of sugar to the inconvenience of manufacturing in bond. If, and when, the difficulty arose they should certainly proceed to take action.

MR. LOUGH said that the explanation of the right hon. Gentleman reminded him of the scriptural maxim, "The way of the transgressor is hard." If it was not right to put all these factories in bond, why was it right to put any? Why were the sixteen sugar refineries to be placed in bond? The cat had now been let out of the bag. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had now admitted it was the difficulty of administering the Act which had pressed the Government to take the tortuous policy they were adopting in the Bill. How could the Chancellor of the Exchequer tell the probabilities? If the House of Commons had any of its old spirit it would not accept such a situation. Every explanation they got only made the matter worse.

MR. BUTCHER (York) said he hoped before the Committee came to an end a provision would be inserted in the Bill that would prevent this country suffering from the importation of sugared articles made from bounty-fed sugar. The Chancellor of the Exchequer did not say that such a thing was not possible, in fact he admitted the probability of it, because he had intimated that if it did occur he would take measures to prevent our manufacturers being treated unfairly. As the matter stood, the right hon. Gentleman had not the power to do so, and therefore he urged the right hon. Gentleman to take powers under this Bill, so that when necessity arose, the Government would be able to take action at once. If it were not possible to accept the Amendment proposed, he would suggest to the Government that they shoulg themselves bring forward an Amendment in this sense—that where they were satisfied that bounty-fed sugar products were being introduced into this country they would either prohibit them or impose countervailing duties. He felt very strongly that we ought to arm ourselves with these powers.

MR. KEARLEY was not surprised that the hon. and learned Member for Yrok had intervened, because the question seriously affected his constituents. What would the great firm of Rowntree feel to-morrow when they read that this House had decided that a free licence was to be given to foreign manufacturers to compete with their industry? And this was the new policy! The question of bond did not arise here. The Chancellor of the Exchequer showed total absence of knowledge. The Colonial Secretary really ought to be sent for. They were knocking the bottom out of the new policy entirely. What were these wonderful expert advisers of the Government doing at the Convention to allow things to get into this state? The Government had not the slightest intention of protecting our home manufacturers against the dumping down of bounty-fed sugared articles. If the House of Commons submitted to this it was not worthy of the continued confidence of the people.

MR. MIDDLEMORE (Birmingham, N.) said that although the debate had lasted for some hours, not a single word had been said in real antagonism to the Amendment, and even the right hon. Gentleman in chargo of the Bill had not spoken in any radical way against it. Was not the real meaning of the attitude of the Government to be found in their determination to avoid a Report stage? Was that a dignified course to take? Would it not—and he spoke as a strong supporter of the Government—would it not be better almost to abandon the Bill than to think so lightly of it that the Government would seek to avoid the Report stage in regard to it? The President of the Board of Trade had said that the Amendment contravened certain clauses, and violated the spirit of the Convention. It seemed to him, however, to be a legitimate carrying out of the first clause, which they had been told was in the nature of a preamble. The Chairman had thoroughly admitted every point, and regarded the Amendment as in perfect order. He therefore submitted there was little in the right hon. Gentleman's contention. The next suggestion of the right hon. Gentleman was that if the Amendment proved in the future to be necessary, a fresh Bill might be introduced. That was hardly a business-like proceeding. It ought to be a case of "now or never." The Government were getting into a rather tight place. He was bound to say that in any deliberative assembly in which Members had a free hand the Amendment would have to be accepted, and if the Government would give them a free hand now he was confident it would be carried by a large majority. The case for its acceptance had been made out. Great industries were involved; one of them employing 100,000 men. If they went carefully and methodically through the industries they would find that something like 500,000 men were affected by the measure. An Amendment of this sort was not a thing to scamp, and a Report stage, under such circumstances, was not a thing to avoid. If the Government could make no promise for the future, nor accept the Amendment, he should most unwillingly, and with great regret, be compelled to vote against them.

*MR. WALTER PALMER (Salisbury) said the basis of the argument of the hon. Member for Devonport was, in his opinion, entirely wrong. The hon. Member feared that the manufacturers in this country would suffer from the competition of foreign nations in sending to this country articles containing bounty-fed sugar, and he repeated the statement that the average price of sugar was likely to be higher in the future than in the past. As he had not been able to express his views during the Second Reading debate, he wished to take this opportunity of saying that, after most careful study of the whole question, he believed that the President of the Board of Trade was perfectly correct in stating that apart from mere fluctuation in price for the moment, the average price of sugar in the future would not be higher than it had been in recent years. The underlying argument in all the speeches made by opponents of the Government was that the price of sugar would rise. He wished emphatically to say that he disagreed with hon. Members opposite. If this view proved to be correct, the contention of the hon. Member for Devonport fell to the ground. The insertion of this Amendment would probably render it absolutely impossible to work the Act. There were hundreds, probably thousands, of such articles coming into the country, and it would be quite impossible to carry out the clause if the words were inserted.

MR. PIERPOINT (Warrington) suggested that the words of the Convention "sugar-sweetened products such as preserves, &c." were better than the words of the Amendment. He thought the President of the Board of Trade ought to let the Committee know whether he intended to resist any Amendment of this clause in order to avoid a Report stage, or whether it was because he considered himself bound by the Convention to permit no Amendment. If the desire was to avoid the Report stage he could understand the position; but if the right hon. Gentleman considered himself precluded by the Convention from accepting any Amendment, he could not understand it at all. The provisions of Article I. were not confined to Article I. That Article was obviously in the nature of a preamble, and the expansion of the meaning of the word "sugar" applied to all the Articles in the Convention. Then in Article I. there were the interpreting clauses as to bonuses and bounties, and he presumed that those interpreting clauses were intended to apply to other Articles also. With regard to what he looked upon as the very real difficulty in connection with the trade, it was not at all satisfactory to be told by the right hon. Gentleman and the Chancellor of the Exchequer that, if the difficulty arose, they would at once deal with it. For twenty-five years legislation on this bounty question had been awaited, and what guarantee was there that, if the difficulty arose, the Government of the day would at once deal with a particular industry if other matters pressed? On this particular part of the Convention the Government had put themselves into such a position that it would be extremely difficult for some of their most faithful adherents to support them.

MR. MARKHAM (Nottinghamshire, Mansfield) asked whether any investigations had been made by the Board of Trade to ascertain the exact amount of bounty-fed sugar goods which came into this country from nations outside the Convention. On an important matter of this sort definite figures ought to be given. He further asked where the line was to be drawn, and at what definite point the Government would be prepared to take action.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES said it was a complete mistake to suppose that if power were taken to prohibit the importation of bounty-fed biscuits and other commodities it would be necessary to manufacture those articles in bond. A most important point had been raised in the debate, and he understood that the Chancellor of the Exchequer was open to be convinced. The point was that if the Government were taking power to prohibit, under certain circumstances, the importation of bounty-fed sugar, they were bound by the Convention also to prohibit the importation of bounty-fed sugared products. The first clause was more or less an interpretation clause. If it was not an interpretation clause for sugar, how could it be contended that it was an interpretation clause for bounties? The contention of the Government that they could adopt the definition with regard to bounties and reject it with regard to sugar was a most unreasonable one. They surely could not intend to throw open all our ports to bounty-fed jams and biscuits while closing them to bounty-fed sugar. He hoped the Government would reconsider the matter, and either postpone the clause or undertake to amend it on Report. If that were done, he believed a great part of the difficulty could be got over. As to the Amendment before the Committee, he thought the words were not quite applicable; they were far too wide. The words of the Convention itself were much preferable.

MR. MARKHAM asked where was the dividing line in this ridiculous Bill. Surely the right hon. Gentleman must justify this proposal and state where the dividing line came in.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR said it was impossible to draw such a distinction, and it would be far better to deal with the matter by a separate Bill. The Government were entirely averse to putting in a provision which would carry with it certain other products, for that course would be exceedingly inconvenient. In all probability if sugared goods were included it would be necessary to carry on every kind of manufacture, in which sugar was employed, in bond, and they wanted to avoid that. If the difficulty should occur it was better that they should deal with it unencumbered by a provision of this kind.

MR. ASQUITH (Fifeshire, E.) said he found himself entirely at a loss to understand the position which the Government had taken up in regard to this clause. How did they stand? It was conceded that the effect of the Convention and of this Bill when they became law would be this. On the one hand it was proposed that the Government of this country under this Bill would have the power of prohibiting the importation of bounty-fed sugar in the ordinary sense of the term. Therefore, the raw material, which was an important ingredient in their supplementary manufactures, could no longer be imported into this country. That was clear. On the other hand, by the rejection of the Amendment which his hon. friend had proposed, it would be out of the power of the Government to take the same steps, that was to say, to propose a prohibition upon bounty-fed manufactured products. The raw material would necessarily be excluded, but there was no power to exclude the manufactured article, although that manufactured article was produced out of a bounty-fed raw material. That was very paradoxical and unbusinesslike, and, in view of the recent proposals, a more absurdly illogical proposition to lay before Parliament it was impossible to conceive. What was the answer which the President of the Board of Trade made when this difficulty was pointed out, not only from this side of the House, but by some of the firmest and unwavering supporters of the Government? He said that the Government would deal with the case when it arose. It was a danger, the occurrence of which was rendered distinctly more probable by the provisions of this very Bill, because if the effect of this Bill was going to be as they supposed it would be, to cheapen the price of sugar in those foreign countries, it would necessarily and *pro tanto* stimulate the manufacturing industries, and induce the countries which were not parties to the Convention to introduce an additional motive for giving a stimulus to those manufactured products. The Bill itself tended to accelerate and intensify the state of things against which the Amendment was directed, and the only answer of the Government was to deliberately throw away the only opportunity of remedying this. They were asked to wait until the danger was upon them, and until some serious encroachment had been made. Then, and not till then, the Government declared, they would make a belated application to Parliament to do that which they could do now. He would not inquire what were the motives of the Government. He had heard it suggested on the other side of the House that there was a desire to pass this Bill through without the necessity for further consideration on the Report stage. It was far too serious a matter to tamper with the interests and the security of one of the most valuable and the most growing industries of this country in order to save a few hours of Parliamentary time. Every argument which had been used pointed conclusively in one direction—and this was not disputed even by the Government themselves—namely, that when this danger did arise steps would have to be taken to deal with it. He strongly hoped that the House of Commons would rise superior both to the traditions of Parliament, and the desire for early holidays, and pass this Amendment.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES rose to speak, when

MR. GERALD BALFOUR rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question be now put."

Question put, "That the Question be now put."

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 161; Noes, 90. (Division List No. 215.)

AYES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Atkinson, Right Hon. John
Bagot, Capt. Josceline FitzRoy
Bailey, James (*Walworth*)
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour, Rt. Hon. AJ (*Manch'r.*)
Balfour, Rt. Hn. G. W. (*Leeds*
Balfour, Kenneth R. (*Christch*
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bigwood, James
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Bousfield, William Robert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Bull, William James
Butcher, John George
Campbell, J. H. M. (*Dublin Univ*
Carson, Rt. Hon Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, R. F. (*N. Lancs.*)
Cavendish, V. C. W. (*Derbyshire*
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Cecil, Evelyn (*Aston Manor*)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J. (*Birm.*
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. JA. (*Worc*
Charrington Spencer
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Right Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Charles Ready
Corbett, A. Cameron (*Glasgow*
Corbett, T. L. (*Down, North*)
Cox, Irwin Edwd. Bainbridge
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Crossley, Sir Savile
Dickson, Charles Scott
Doughty, George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers
Duke, Henry Edward
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Faber, E. B. (*Hants, W.*)
Faber, George Denison (*York*)
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J (*Manc'r*
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Flower, Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Philip S. (*Warwick, S. W.*
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Gibbs, Hn A. G. H (*City of Lond*
Godson, Sir Augustus Fredk.
Gordon, Hn. J. E. (*Elgin & Nairn*
Gordon, J. (*Londonderry, S.*)
Gore, Hn G. R. C. Ormsby- (*Salop*
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Groves, James Grimble
Hall, Edward Marshall
Hamilton, Rt Hn Ld. G. (*Midx*
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Hatch, Ernest Frederick George
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, James (*Staffords, N. W.*
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hogg, Lindsay
Howard, J. (*Midd., Tott'ham*
Jeffreys, Rt. Hn. Arthur Fred
Keswick, William
Law, Andrew Bonar (*Glasgow*)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (*Liverpool*
Lawson, John Grant (*Yorks N. R*
Lee, A. H. (*Hants., Fareham*)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower Frederick N. S
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (*Bristol, S.*
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Francis William
Lowther, C. (*Cumb., Eskdale*)
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas, Reginald J. (*Portsmouth*
Macdona, John Cumming
M'Arthur, Charles (*Liverpool*)
Maxwell, Rt Hn Sir H. E (*Wig'n.*
Melville, Beresford Valentine
Milvain, Thomas
Montagu, Hon. J. Scott (*Hants*
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Morgan, David J (*Walthamstow*
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Murray, Rt Hn A. Graham (*Bute*
Murray, Chas. J. (*Coventry*)
Nicholson, William Graham
O'Connor, Jas. (*Wicklow, W.*)
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Palmer, Walter (*Salisbury*)
Percy, Earl
Pierpoint, Robert
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Walter R.
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Rankin, Sir James
Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
Rattigan, Sir William Henry
Reid, James (*Greenock*)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Renshaw, Sir Charles Bine
Renwick, George
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. Chas. Thomson
Roberts, Samuel (*Sheffield*)
Robertson, Herbert (*Hackney*
Rolleston, Sir John F. L.

Mr. Asquith.

Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sandys, Lt.-Col. Thos. Myles
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Shaw-Stewart, M.H. (*Renfrew*
Sinclair, Louis (*Romford*)
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smith, Abel H. (*Hertford, E.*)
Smith, James Parker(*Lanarks.*
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Edw. Jas. (*Somerset*)
Stanley, Lord (*Lancs.*)
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir Jn. M.
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Stroyan, John
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Talbot, Lord E. (*Chichester*)
Thornton, Percy M.
Tollemache, Henry James
Valentia, Viscount
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt. Hn. Sir Wm. H.
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Webb, Colonel William George
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Williams, RtHnJPowell-(*Birm*
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wills, Sir Frederick
Wilson-Todd, Sir W.H.(*Yorks.*
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (*Bath*
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Asher, Alexander
Asquith, Rt. Hon. Herbt. Hy.
Bayley, Thomas (*Derbyshire*)
Bell, Richard
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Bowles, T. G. (*Lynn Regis*)
Brigg, John
Broadhurst, Henry
Bryce, Right Hon. James
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burt, Thomas
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Campbell, John (*Armagh, S.*)
Causton, Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Channing, Francis Allston
Cremer, William Randal
Crooks, William
Dalkeith, Earl of
Devlin, Joseph (*Kilkenny, N.*)
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Douglas, Charles M. (*Lanark*)
Dunn, Sir William
Elibank, Master of
Emmott, Alfred
Fenwick, Charles
Foster, Sir Walter (*Derby Co.*)
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir John Eldon
Griffith, Ellis J.
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Harmsworth, R. Leicester
Harwood, George
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-
Hayter, Rt. Hn. Sir Arthur D.
Henderson, Arthur (*Durham*)
Holland, Sir William Henry
Horniman, Frederick John
Humphreys-Owen, Arthur C.
Hutchinson, Dr. Charles Fredk.
Hutton, Alfred E. (*Morley*)
Jacoby, James Alfred
Jones, Wm. (*Carnarvonshire*)
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kemp, Lieut.-Colonel George
Lambton, Hon. Fredk. Wm.
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (*Cornwall*)
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lough, Thomas
Lundon, W.
M'Killop, W. (*Sligo, North*)
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Markham, Arthur Basil
Moss, Samuel
Nolan, Col. John P. (*Galway, N.*)
Nolan, Joseph (*Louth, S.*)
Norman, Henry
Nussey, Thomas Willans
O'Brien, Patrick (*Kilkenny*)
Paulton, James Mellor
Pearson, Sir Weetman D.
Perks, Robert William
Price, Robert John
Priestley, Arthur
Rigg, Richard
Roberts, John Bryn (*Eifion*)
Roberts, John H. (*Denbighs.*)
Robertson, Edmund (*Dundee*)
Robson, William Snowdon
Runciman, Walter
Samuel, Herbert L. (*Cleveland*)
Seely, Maj. J. E. B. (*Isle of Wight*
Shackleton, David James
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Spencer, RtHnC.R.(*Northants*
Taylor, Theodore C.(*Radcliffe*)
Thomas, F. Freeman (*Hastings*)
Thomson, F. W. (*York, W. R.*)
Tomkinson, James
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Ure, Alexander
Wallace, Robert
Walton, J. Lawson (*Leeds, S.*)
Warner, Thos. Courtenay T.
White, Luke (*York, E. R.*)
Whitley, J. H. (*Halifax*)
Wilson, H. J. (*York, W.R.*)
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Herbert Gladstone and Mr. William M'Arthur.

Question put accordingly.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 88; Noes, 156. (Division List No. 216.)

AYES.

Asher, Alexander
Asquith, Rt. Hon. Herbt. Hy.
Bayley, Thomas (*Derbyshire*)
Bell, Richard
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Bowles, T. Gibson (*Lynn Regis*
Brigg, John
Broadhurst, Henry
Bryce, Right Hon. James
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burt, Thomas
Butcher, John George
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Causton, Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Channing, Francis Allston
Corbett, A. Cameron (*Glasg.*)
Cremer, William Randal
Crooks, William
Dalkeith, Earl of
Devlin, Joseph (*Kilkenny, N.*)
Dilke, Rt. Hn. Sir Charles
Douglas, Charles M. (*Lanark*)
Dunn, Sir William
Elibank, Master of
Emmott, Alfred
Faber, George Denison (*York*)
Fenwick, Charles
Foster, Sir Walter (*Derby Co.*)
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir J. Eldon
Griffith, Ellis J.
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Harmsworth, R. Leicester
Harwood, George
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-
Hayter, Rt. Hon. Sir Arthur D.
Henderson, Arthur (*Durham*)
Holland, Sir William Henry
Horniman, Frederick John
Humphreys-Owen, Arthur C.
Hutchinson, Dr. Charles Fredk.
Hutton, Alfred E. (*Morley*)
Jacoby, James Alfred
Jones, William (*Carnarvonsh.*
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kemp, Lieut.-Colonel George
Lambton, Hon. Fredk. Wm.
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (*Cornwall*)
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lough, Thomas
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Markham, Arthur Basil
Moss, Samuel
Nolan, Col. John P. (*Galway, N.*
Norman, Henry

Nussey, Thomas Willans
Paulton, James Mellor
Pearson, Sir Weetman D.
Perks, Robert William
Price, Robert John
Priestley, Arthur
Rigg, Richard
Roberts, John Bryn (*Eifion*)
Roberts, John H. (*Denbighs.*)
Robertson, Edmund (*Dundee*)
Robson, William Snowdon
Runciman, Walter
Samuel, Herbert L. (*Cleveland*
Seely-Maj.J.E.B.(*IsleofWight*
Shackleton, David James
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Spencer,RtHn C.R.(*Northants*
Taylor,Theodore C. (*Radcliffe*)
Thomas,F. Freeman(*Hastings*)
Thomson, F. W. (*York, W. R.*)
Tomkinson, James
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Ure, Alexander
Wallace, Robert
Walton, J. Lawson (*Leeds, S.*)
Warner, Thos. Courtenay T.
White, Luke (*York, E.R.*)
Whitley, J. H. (*Halifax*)
Wilson, Henry J. (*York, W.R.*
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE AYES — Mr. Herbert Gladstone and Mr. William M'Arthur.

NOES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Atkinson, Right Hon. John
Bagot, Capt.Josceline FitzRoy
Bailey, James (*Walworth*)
Balcarres, Lord
Balfour,Rt. Hn. A. J. (*Manch'r*
Balfour,Rt.HnGerald W(*Leeds*
Balfour, Kenneth R.(*Christch.*
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bigwood, James
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Bousfield, William Robert
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Bull, William James
Campbell,J.H M.(*DublinUniv.*
Campbell, John (*Armagh, S.*)
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, R. F. (*N. Lancs.*)
Cavendish,V.C.W.(*Derbyshire*
Cayzer, Sir Charles William
Cecil, Evelyn (*Aston Manor*)
Chamberlain,Rt.Hn. J.(*Birm.*
Chamberlain,RtHnJ.A.(*Worc*
Charrington, Spencer
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Right Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Chas. Ready
Corbett, T. L. (*Down, North*)
Cox, Irwin Edwd. Bainbridge
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Crossley, Sir Savile
Dickson, Charles Scott
Doughty, George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Elliot, Hon A. Ralph Douglas
Faber, Edmund B. (*Hants, W.*
Fellowes,Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson,Rt.Hn.SirJ.(*Man'r*
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Flower, Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster, P. S. (*Warwick, S.W.*
Galloway, William Johnson
Gardner, Ernest
Gibbs,HonAGH(*CityofLond'n*
Godson, Sir Augustus Fredk.
Gordon,Hn.J.E.(*Elgin & N'rn.*
Gordon, J. (*Londonderry, S.*)
Gore,HnG.R.C.Ormsby-(*Salop*
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Groves, James Grimble
Hall, Edward Marshall
Hamilton,RtHnLordG(*Midd'x*
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Hatch, Ernest Frederick Geo.
Heath,James(*Staffords.,N.W.*
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hogg, Lindsay
Jeffreys,Rt.Hon.Arthur Fred.
Keswick, William
Law, Andrew Bonar (*Glasgow*
Lawrence, Wm. F. (*Liverpool*
Lawson,JohnGrant(*Yorks.NR*
Lee, A. H. (*Hants., Fareham*)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower,Frederick N.S
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Rt. Hn. W. (*Bristol, S.*
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Francis William
Lowther, C. (*Cumb., Eskdale*)
Lowther, Rt. Hon. Jas. (*Kent*)
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas, Reg'ld J. (*Portsmouth*)
Lundon, W.
Macdona, John Cumming
M'Arthur, Charles (*Liverpool*)
M'Killop, W. (*Sligo, North*)
Melville, Beresford Valentine
Milvain, Thomas
Montagu,Hon.J.Scott(*Hants.*)
Morgan, D. J. (*Walthamstow*)
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Murray,RtHnA.Graham(*Bute*
Murray, Charles J. (*Coventry*)
Nicholson, William Graham
Nolan, Joseph (*Louth, S.*)
O'Brien, Patrick (*Kilkenny*)
O'Connor, Jas. (*Wicklow, W.*)
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Palmer, Walter (*Salisbury*)
Percy, Earl
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Walter R.
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Rankin, Sir James
Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
Rattigan, Sir William Henry
Reid, James (*Greenock*)
Remnant, Jas. Farquharson
Renshaw, Sir Charles Bine
Renwick, George
Ritchie,Rt.Hn.Chas.Thomson
Roberts, Samuel (*Sheffield*)
Robertson, H. (*Hackney*)
Rolleston, Sir John F. L.
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sandys, Lt.-Col. Thos. Myles
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Shaw-Stewart,M.H.(*Renfrew*)
Sinclair, Louis (*Romford*)
Sloan, Thomas Henry
Smith,James Parker(*Lanarks.*
Spear, John Ward
Stanley,EdwardJas.(*Somerset*)
Stanley, Lord (*Lancs.*)
Stirling-Maxwell, Sir Jn. M.
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Stroyan, John
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Talbot, Lord E. (*Chichester*)
Thornton, Percy M.
Tollemache, Henry James
Valentia, Viscount
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond,Rt.Hn.SirWilliamH.
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Webb, Col. William George
Whitmore, Charles Algernon.
William,RtHnJ Powell-(*Birm*
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wills, Sir Frederick
Wilson-Todd, Sir W. H.(*Yorks*
Wodehouse,Rt.Hn.E.R. (*Bath*
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham-Quin, MajorW. H.

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Anstruther.

*THE CHAIRMAN said the next Amendment which was in order was that standing in the name of the hon. Member for Linlithgowshire, to leave out from "Kingdom," line 19, to the end of line 21.

MR. URE moved to report Progress.

Committee report Progress; to sit again this evening.

EVENING SITTING.

SUGAR CONVENTION BILL.

(Considered in Committee.)

(In the Committee.)

[MR. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith) in the Chair.]

Clause 1.

MR. KEARLEY, on a point of order, submitted that an Amendment standing in his name, which had been ruled out, was in order.

*THE CHAIRMAN said he did not think it could be for the reason that Article X of the Convention provided that the Convention should come into force on the 1st of September, 1903, and the three months' notice desired by the Amendment would carry it over the date when the Convention was to come into force.

MR. KEARLEY said his Amendment only applied to the case where a prohibition order was issued. An Order in Council might be issued at a later stage owing to one of the contracting Powers contravening the Convention, and he desired to raise the question as to what would happen when such an Order was issued in Council.

*THE CHAIRMAN said he thought the Amendment, as drawn by the hon. Member, was drawn too wide. If it were accepted it would prevent a prohibition order being issued for a term of three months, and assuming that a prohibition order was issued within a few days of this Bill becoming an Act, that prohibition order would not come into force until a period of three months had elapsed, which would carry it over the date fixed for the Convention to come into force.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON submitted that the terms of the Convention would be complied with by the issue of the order. All that the Convention required was that the order should be issued.

*THE CHAIRMAN said that was not so, the words in the Convention were "Come into force."

MR. LOUGH submitted that the Amendment was a very necessary Amendment, because in the event of an order being issued it was very necessary that notice should be given to this country. He had no doubt that if the Amendment was too wide his hon. friend would be willing to add any words that were necessary to bring it into order. He thought it was absolutely necessary for the commerce of this country that some notice should be given, and that the Convention would be effectively carried out if notice were given that after three months no more sugar would be allowed to come into this country from any particular part.

*THE CHAIRMAN said he thought as at present drafted the Amendment was not in order, though the hon. Member might find words to meet his objection.

MR. KEARLEY said he understood that he should not by not moving it now lose his opportunity of moving it later in a modified form at the end of the clause. It seemed to him that in this sub-section the opportunity occurred, and it might not occur again. He asked that his opportunity might be preserved to him.

*THE CHAIRMAN said he could not go so far as that, all he could say was that the hon. Member was not in a worse position by not moving his Amendment now.

MR. URE moved the omission of the words—

> "Subject to any provision, which may be made by Parliament in lieu of such prohibition, to impose a special duty on such sugar in accordance with the Convention."

The Convention made the most serious inroad ever made within the memory of any Member of the House upon the rights of Parliament, because it devolved upon a body of foreign officials the right to intervene in the fiscal arrangements of the United Kingdom; but the Convention did not go so far as to say that having adopted the method of prohibition we should be for ever debarred from adopting the method of countervailing duties. The proviso in the Bill suggested that having adopted one method we were restricted to that method, and by striking out these words in the clause he wished to leave Parliament free to deal with bounty-fed sugar in the future as the circumstances of the time and the changes that might occur would dictate. He begged to move.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 1, line 19, to leave out from the word 'Kingdom,' to the end of line 21."—(*Mr. Ure.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the clause."

MR. GERALD BALFOUR said he had listened with great attention to the argument of the hon. Gentleman, but had failed to find out what his objection to these words was. There were two alternatives in this matter. One was to penalise sugar by countervailing duties, and the other was prohibition. He could not see that any reason had been adduced for omitting this proviso. The object of the proviso was to indicate to all whom it might concern that this country, whilst adopting by preference the plan of prohibition, still regarded it as a perfectly open question whether in certain circumstances it should not have recourse to the remedy of imposing countervailing duties.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON objected to the words as simple surplusage. It was bad drafting to introduce into a Bill words that were unnecessary. The Chairman had indicated that nothing was to be introduced into the Bill that was outside the scope of the Convention, and if that was a good ruling it should tell both ways. These words were entirely beyond the scope of the Convention. The right hon. Gentleman had said that this was an indication or suggestion that this country might take a different action if it became necessary. It was not the business of the British Parliament to make suggestions to foreigners or anybody else, and to introduce a suggestion of this sort into a Bill of this kind was derogatory to British institutions.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES said he could not agree that these words were mere surplusage. They had considerable effect in certain eventualities. In certain eventualities only was His Majesty allowed to do certain things. His Majesty was to sit mute and do nothing until a Commission of foreigners reported. Then His Majesty assembled his Privy Council and issued an order prohibiting the importation of certain sugar, though not against the articles made from it. That was what was suggested, but it was all make-believe. What really happened was that a clerk drew up in his own phrases an order which was submitted to one or two members of the Privy Council, who were members of the Ministry, and, if approved by them, a new law was forever fixed upon the country. No provision for the second alternative could be made by Parliament without the sanction of the Ministers of the Crown, who were the same persons as those who sanctioned the Order in Council, who would have to propose it. This was one of the amusing features of the Bill. His Majesty could prohibit the importation of sugar, but the very much milder course of imposing countervailing duties would require the whole machinery of Parliament, because such action would partake of the nature of a duty imposed on the people. These words, therefore, were not surplusage from the point of view of Parliament, though they were from the point of view of the Government. The Government had announced over and over again that their policy was prohibition pure and simple, and these words were put into this section merely in order to throw dust in the eyes of Parliament. The Government wanted to persuade the House that, under certain circumstances, they would come down and propose not prohibition but some lighter penalty on the offending sugar. Under what circumstances would the Government propose to come down to the House and say, "We propose to abandon prohibition and adopt some other measure?" It was not as if this section gave to the King power to impose countervailing duties, which would, perhaps, be a more reasonable thing than giving him the power of prohibition. Once having adopted the principle of prohibition it would be rather remarkable for the Government to come down and propose to repeal it. This was one of the great defects of this Bill, as hon. Members would see if they only read the last finding of the permanent Commission, which provided that the Commission should ponder and weigh and decide the exact amount of the bounty.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR, on a point of order, submitted that this matter had already been discussed and decided.

*THE CHAIRMAN said he hardly thought it was out of order. The ground was gone over several times on previous nights, and he hoped the hon. Member would bear that in mind.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES: It seemed to him that if the right hon. Gentleman desired to take that course he ought to come to Parliament for a new Act. His contention was that the whole thing was contrary to the spirit of the Convention, which was to equalise competition, whereas this dis-equalised competition. The Bill was very badly drawn. He believed that the draftsman desired to carry out the Convention, but he did not get over the difficulties in his way by this proviso. In fact, the proviso amounted to nothing at all. It seemed to him that there was a very wide difference between Executive and Parliamentary action, and that there were objections of every kind, practical and constitutional, to the words proposed to be left out. He was strongly of opinion that these words ought to be left out.

MR. LOUGH said he could not agree with his hon. friend the Member for King's Lynn that the right of imposing countervailing duties should be given to the King in Council. His hon. friend suggested that these words were surplusage; he would complete the argument and say that they were merely nonsense.

MR. BRYCE said that the word "subject" was not happy. What conceivable use could there be of putting in a phrase like that, which had absolutely no meaning. The proviso practically amounted to a statement that if Parliament should legislate hereafter on this subject, its legislation would take effect, notwithstanding any Order in Council. Was it not ridiculous that Parliament should be asked to state that it had power to legislate, notwithstanding such an Order? Why, it had power to legislate, notwithstanding previous statutes. What possible use could there be in keeping in these words?

MR. GERALD BALFOUR said that the proviso effected more than the right hon. Gentleman had indicated. The Government wished, in drafting this Bill, to give due notice to the various countries concerned, that while they adopted the principle of prohibition so far as the rough and ready powers given to the Privy Council were concerned, they still did not exclude from their minds the probability or possibility of employing another remedy.

MR. BRYCE said that *ex hypothesi* the remedy of countervailing duties was less violent and less dangerous than that of prohibition, and, therefore, he could not appreciate the right hon. Gentleman's argument. If they wanted to give notice to foreign Powers they could do so by a diplomatic note or protocol.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 114 Noes, 54. (Division List No. 217.)

AYES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arnold-Foster, Hugh O.
Atkinson, Right Hon. John
Bailey, James (*Walworth*)
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (*Man'r*
Balfour, Rt. Hn. G. W. (*Leeds*
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.

Blundell, Colonel Henry
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Butcher, John George
Campbell, J. H. M. (*Dublin Univ*
Cavendish, V. C. W. (*Derbyshire*
Charrington, Spencer
Cochrane, Hon. Thomas H. A. E.
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Charles Ready
Cox, Irwin Edwd. Bainbridge
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Crossley, Sir Savile
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dimsdale, Rt. Hon. Sir Jos. C.
Doughty, George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers
Duke, Henry Edward
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Faber, George Denison (*York*)
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson, Rt Hn. Sir J. (*Man'r*
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Flower, Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Philip S. (*Warwick, S.W.*
Gardner, Ernest
Gibbs, Hn A. G. H. (*City of Lond*
Godson, Sir Augustus Frederick
Gordon, Hn. J. E. (*Elgin & N'rn*
Gordon, J. (*Londonderry, S.*)
Gorst, Rt. Hon. Sir J. Eldon
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Greene, W. Raymond (*Cambs*
Groves, James Grimble
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Hall, Edward Marshall
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Hatch, Ernest Frederick G.
Heath, James (*Staffords., N.W.*
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hogg, Lindsay
Houston, Robert Paterson
Howard, J. (*Midd., Tott'ham*
Jameson, Major J. Eustace
Jeffreys, Rt. Hn. Arthur Fred
Johnstone, Heywood
Keswick, William
Lambton, Hon. Fredk. Wm.
Law, Andrew Bonar (*Glasgow*)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (*Liverpool*)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Lowther, C. (*Cumb., Eskdale*
Lowther, Rt. Hon. Jas. (*Kent*)
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lyttelton, Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
Milvain, Thomas
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Murray, Rt Hn A. Graham (*Bute*
Palmer, Walter (*Salisbury*)
Percy, Earl
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Walter R.
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Reid, James (*Greenock*)
Remnant, Jas. Farquharson
Renshaw, Sir Charles Bine
Renwick, George
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. C. Thomson
Roberts, Samuel (*Sheffield*)
Robertson, Herbert (*Hackney*)
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Sinclair, Louis (*Romford*)
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (*Strand*)
Spear, John Ward
Stanley, Lord (*Lancs.*)
Stone, Sir Benjamin
Stroyan, John
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Talbot, Lord E. (*Chichester*)
Taylor, Austin (*East Toxteth*)
Valentia, Viscount
Walrond, Rt Hn. Sir William H.
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Webb, Col. William George
Williams Rt Hn J Powell- (*Birm*
Wilson-Todd, Sir W. H. (*Yorks*
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (*Bath*
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Bayley, Thomas (*Derbyshire*)
Bell, Richard
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Bowles, T. Gibson (*Lynn Regis*
Brigg, John
Broadhurst, Henry
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burt, Thomas
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Causton, Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Cremer, William Randal
Crooks, William
Dilke, Rt Hon. Sir Charles
Douglas, Charles M. (*Lanark*)
Fenwick, Charles
Foster, Sir Walter (*Derby Co.*)
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-
Henderson, Arthur (*Durham*
Horniman, Frederick John
Humphreys-Owen, Arthur C.
Hutchinson, Dr. Chas. Fredk.
Jones, William (*Carnarv'nshire*
Kearley, Hudson E.
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (*Cornwall*)
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Markham, Arthur Basil
Moss, Samuel
Price, Robert John
Rigg, Richard
Roberts, John Bryon (*Eifion*)
Roberts, John H. (*Denbighs.*)
Robertson, Edmund (*Dundee*)
Robson, William Snowdon
Runciman, Walter
Samuel, Herbert L. (*Cleveland*
Shackleton, David James
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Spencer, Rt. Hn. C. R. (*Northants*
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Theodore C. (*Radcliffe*)
Thomas, F. Freeman (*Hastings*)
Thomson, F. W. (*York, W. R.*)
Tomkinson, James
Toulmin, George
Trevelyan, Charles Philips
Walton, J. Lawson (*Leeds, S.*)
White, Luke (*York, E. R.*)
Whitley, J. H. (*Halifax*)
Yoxall, James Henry

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Ure and Mr. Lough.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON said that the Bill made no provision for the discontinuance of an order except by special revocations. The Amendment which he had placed upon the Paper made the continuance of an order dependent upon the continuance of the circumstances which had brought it into existence. He put it to the right hon. Gentleman that this was a very serious thing for our trade. This strong penal clause ought to be strictly guarded and limited. He begged to move.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 1, line 21, after the word 'Convention,' to insert the words 'and such order shall be in force until the permanent Commission reports that such bounty is no longer granted in such foreign country.'"—(*Mr. Edmund Robertson.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. GERALD BALFOUR said that in his opinion the Amendment amounted to an absurdity. When the reason for an order had expired the order would be revoked.

MR. LOUGH said that what was wanted was to have a business conclusion to these transactions. None of the other Powers had any interest under this clause except this country. We were the only importing Power, and, therefore, we wanted to provide a machinery to have an end put to these transactions at some time.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES said he did not know what sort of methods might sway future Governments, but this Bill placed the whole fiscal system of this country at the discretion of the Government for the time being, so far as the prohibition of sugar was concerned. The right hon Gentleman had said that was not exactly what was proposed, but his (Mr. Bowles) opinion was that the order should be revoked when the permanent Commission reported that the bounty had ceased to be granted. It seemed to him to be only reasonable that when they made a provision for the prohibition of sugar they should also allow for the cessation of the order.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON said he did not like the words because they gave too much power to the permanent Commission. He would give some discretion to the Executive Government, and he thought something was to be said for putting in some word so that when the permanent Commission reported that the bounty was to be taken off, it should not be in the power of the Government to continue the duty. Circumstances might easily arise in which there might be some delay or reason whereby the prohibition was not taken off, and he failed to understand why the right hon. Gentleman could not accept some Amendment to settle the matter.

MR LAWSON WALTON said it was important that inasmuch as the publication of the order was made in such a way that the traders had notice of it, so the revocation of the order ought to be published with the same formalities, and its effect made known over an equally wide area. His objection to the Amendment was that the moment the Commission sitting in Brussels came to report that the bounty had ceased to be given, then, *ipso facto*, the operation of the order of the Council in this country came to an end. But how was the world at large to know the precise moment at which the Commission in Brussels came to the conclusion to publish a report that the bounty had ceased? It was necessary, therefore, that the order formally issued should be as formally withdrawn by the same authority, with the same publicity, and with the same sanction. Surely the right hon. Gentleman recognised that when the justification of the order had been withdrawn the obligation would be cast upon the Government to formally withdraw the order.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON did not propose to put the Committee to the trouble of a division, and asked leave to withdraw the Amendment, at the same time suggesting that when Clause 3 came to be considered the point could be dealt with by the Committee.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

MR. KEARLEY said he wished to propose an Amendment that was not upon the Paper. It was clearly laid down in the Convention what would happen under certain conditions, but the sugar traders were not supposed to know what the Convention contained, and this Bill, which was going to enact so much, did not contain what would be the penalties to be imposed, under certain conditions, at a later date. His object was to make clear in the Bill the liability of the merchants to the States with whom they had forward contracts.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR said the effect of this Amendment would be to prolong the time which was fixed by the Act at two months.

MR. LOUGH said he thought that a country legislating, as they were that night, should fix when the new duties should come into operation He suggested that they should fix the time at one month.

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR said he thought they must fix it at two months.

Mr. BRYCE asked the meaning of the words, "to take effect in two months' time."

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR said they meant that the contracting States must prohibit countervailing duties within that time.

Mr. KEARLEY said his Amendment contemplated the position in the event of the bounty existing after this Convention came into force. He wanted it clearly put in this Bill so that the merchants and traders in this country would know the limit of time in which they could clear their contracts. Otherwise the buyer would find that he had sugar on which he was liable in this country, whilst he would have no claim upon people outside this country. It was monstrous that a merchant should be put in such a position. He begged to move to add at the end of Sub-section 1 the words "provided that any prohibition order issued against any non-signatory State found to be giving a bounty after the Convention comes into force, shall take effect in two months from the date of issue of such order."

Amendment proposed—

"In page 1, line 21, at end, to insert the words 'provided that any prohibition order issued against any non-signatory State found to be giving a bounty after the Convention comes into force shall take effect in two months from the date of issue of such order.'"—(*Mr. Kearley.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

Mr. LOUGH said he understood it would happen that when the permanent Commissioners had the matter brought to their notice, and had reason to suppose that any bounty was given by any particular non-signatory State they would report, and, within two months of the date of that report, the contracting State in order to comply with the Convention must either issue a prohibition order or impose countervailing duties. If the hon. Member's Amendment were to be inserted it would give two months from the making of the order, and would carry it on beyond the date provided for in the Convention. He would suggest that the date should be shortened to one month.

Mr. KEARLEY said he would act upon the suggestion and alter the date from two months to one month in order that the Commissioners need not be called together under a month, and having come to a decision they need not put that decision into force for two months. He imagined that the signatory States would be in a much better position than the non-signatory States. His object was that merchants or brokers in this country, who had entered into contracts with States who put themselves out of order at a later period by giving a bounty, might know how long they had to clear their contracts. He was endeavouring not to put anything in the Bill that was not in accordance with the terms of the Convention, but only to protect the interests of the British trader.

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR said the hon. Member had said he moved the Amendment in the interest of the British trader, but he could not understand how the shortening of the period from two months to one month would promote that interest.

Amendment, as amended, by leave, withdrawn.

Mr. LOUGH moved to omit Sub-section 2 of Clause 1. He said that in Sub-section 1 it was clearly put that if sugar came from any countries and prohibition orders should be issued against those countries, the effect would be that sugar from those countries could not be landed here. Sub-section 2 went a great deal further, and said that, when a prohibition order was in force, the laws relating to Customs should apply as if sugar were specified in the table of prohibitions and restrictions contained in Section 42 of the Customs Consolidation Act 1876. The members of the Committee would not know what that meant, but he would tell them. It dealt with a number of articles which no one could bring into this country without committing a crime. These articles were books copyrighted in this country, false coins or silver of the realm not of the established weight, indecent or obscene prints, articles of foreign manufacture bearing an English name, watches or clocks having on them the name of an English maker, and finally it dealt with infected cattle or sheep, that, on purely sanitary grounds must be excluded. It gave the Customs authorities drastic powers of dealing with these prohibited articles. He proposed to omit that sub-section because any one of those articles might be rightly forfeited or destroyed, but there was no cause to destroy sugar sent to this country from Russia or Egypt, or any other country which might by chance be condemned by this Commission. There was no relevancy between this Act and the provision necessary to be made with regard to sugar. The truth was that the Government were in a difficulty. They had no precedent for prohibition, and did not know how to find means for disposing of the prohibited goods. It was, he contended, not right to give the Customs Commissioners power to destroy or dispose of this property. The provision had been hastily incorporated in the Bill and was not a necessary part of it. The Convention told them in Article III what they ought to do; it did not say that it could be destroyed, and he could not imagine the slightest use for this sub-section, as it simply applied to sugar. He begged to move to omit Sub-section 2 of Clause 1.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 1, line 22, to leave out Sub-section (2)."—(*Mr. Lough.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the clause."

*MR. RITCHIE said that the question was a very simple one. Some kind of machinery was needed to deal with prohibited goods, and the machinery which had been provided in the Act of 1876 was being applied to the case of prohibited sugar. It was, however, an entire mistake to suppose that there would be a destruction of the sugar. In practice the goods were not allowed to be landed, but the Customs authorities might allow the sugar to be taken away to some port where a similar prohibition did not exist. The provision here was in the interest of those who brought in the prohibited cargo, and though the owner was not allowed to land it he could take it away under conditions laid down by the Customs. If this machinery was not adopted it would be impossible to deal with prohibited goods and make effective the prohibition provided by the clause. Instead of setting up new machinery, the Government had thought it better to adopt the machinery which already existed in the Act of 1876.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON said that Section 42 of the Act of 1876 prescribed that certain goods should be forfeited.

*MR. RITCHIE: Or otherwise disposed of.

MR. SYDNEY BUXTON: No, it specified that certain goods should be forfeited, and that, after being forfeited, they might be destroyed or otherwise disposed of as the Commissioners of Customs might direct. Under that Act the Customs officers would not be entitled to order the owner of a cargo to take it away. He failed to understand why the right hon. Gentleman had interpreted the section as he had done.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES said the hon. Member for Poplar had misapprehended Section 42. It was true goods might be forfeited, but in effect they were given back on payment of a fine. He remembered that on one occasion he was threatened with the forfeiture of his yacht, because some of his crew had smuggled tobacco, but he was told that if he paid a fine of £15 10s., he could have it back. He objected to embodying the section in the Bill, because it gave too much latitude to the Customs officials.

MR. BRYCE asked what instructions would be given to meet a case of the kind under this Bill.

*MR. RITCHIE said that the instructions would certainly not contemplate anything like destruction of the sugar. The phrase "forfeited" in the Act of 1876 was a mere technical phrase as applied to the present Bill. Whether a fine would be inflicted or not, would of course depend on the circumstances of the case, but undoubtedly the sugar would be allowed to leave. There would not in any case be any question of destruction.

MR. EDMUND ROBERTSON said that forfeiture implied a loss of property, and the sugar would consequently become the property of the Crown, who would allow the owner to buy it back for a specified sum.

MR. ROBSON thought the right hon. Gentleman had made a most excellent speech in favour of the Amendment, and had entirely justified it. Sub-section 2 was simply a provision which added certain penalties to prohibition. If the sub-section were omitted, we should have prohibition without further penalty. That was a reasonable course to adopt. There was nothing wrong in bringing sugar from a bounty-giving country to this country, especially if the cargo were on its way to some other place. Section 42 of the Customs Act, however, would cover this latter case, and the cargo would become subject to forfeiture. It had been suggested that forfeiture was merely a technical term. But the section of the Customs Act said that the cargo should be forfeited, and might be destroyed or disposed of as the Commissioners thought fit. In these circumstances, if the Commissioners restored the cargo, he thought a Court of law would take the view that they were refusing to perform the obligation which the section cast upon them.

*MR. RITCHIE: It is done every day.

MR. ROBSON said that in that case it was done wrongly every day. He urged that they should confine their action to simple prohibition. They ought not to place sugar in the same category as indecent literature, and he would remind the Committee that the Convention did not pledge us to impose any penalties of this kind.

MR. KEARLEY said the Chancellor of the Exchequer had explained that these goods would be forfeited temporarily, but the objection was to honest goods being forfeited at all. There was no justification for their being so treated. Why could not the right hon. Gentleman be satisfied with refusing the goods access? Lower on the Paper he (the hon. Member) had placed a proposal to add the words "provided that such sugar should not be forfeited or destroyed." If the Chancellor of the Exchequer desired to hasten the proceedings of the Committee he had only to intimate his willingness to accept that Amendment. Unless such an intimation was given they could only consider the matter as it stood in the Bill, and that was that the goods should be forfeited or destroyed.

*MR. RITCHIE said he could not accept the Amendment to whcih the hon. Member referred. Circumstances could be conceived under which the forfeit must be a very real one. The powers of the Customs under the Act to which reference had been made, would be more clearly understood if he read Section 209. (The right hon. Gentleman read the section.) It would thus be seen that the Customs had full power to deal with a cargo of this kind in the way he had suggested. Section 42 was governed by Section 209.

MR. LAWSON WALTON said he fully appreciated the point of view of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and if the administration of these powers was in the hands of the right hon Gentleman they would doubtless be exercised with great consideration. But it had to be remembered that the Government and Customs officials, to whom the discharge of this duty under the system would be entrusted, would be subjected to all kinds of pressure. In some cases it would be indicated that an example ought to be made, and a forfeiture, followed by a remission on a nominal payment, would not meet the demands of persons interested in maintaining the position which those engaged in the trade occupied under this legislation. In such cases a very invidious duty would be cast upon the Custom House officials if they were given the stringent powers conferred by this section. He appealed to the right hon. Gentleman to consider whether powers of a far less drastic character would not meet the necessities of the case. Where cattle were imported in an infected condition the mere fact that their condition was a danger to the health of the port entitled the Customs official to have the cattle destroyed, but where cattle were shipped from an infected port there were powers simply to refuse permission for them to be landed. Surely a similar power would be quite sufficient in this case. The section applied in the Bill was applicable to owners of property who were infringing what they knew to be the law, and every one of the cases referred to was a clear infringement of either the statute or the common law. The Government were now proposing to apply to an innocent person the power of forfeiture, which under the section incorporated, was applicable only to guilty owners who were seeking to evade the law. Such drastic powers were quite unnecessary, and he suggested it would be perfectly sufficient to say that any cargo arriving at a British port while an order, was in operation, would be refused the ordinary rights of landing, and the shipowner ordered to take the cargo elsewhere.

MR. NUSSEY (Pontefract) said that apparently the Customs officials were to have an open mind and hold an inquiry into each special case as the ship came in. He could understand the Government sympathising with that attitude, but he desired to ask whether in the event of the Customs officials giving a harsh verdict, making an example, and insisting on the ship being forfeited, and imposing a heavy fine, there would be any appeal from their decision. Would the owner have any opportunity of placing his case before any other tribunal? If not, he thought this was a very hard provision. In many cases mere prohibition of landing would be quite sufficient.

MR. RUNCIMAN (Dewsbury) instanced the case of a ship entering Liverpool with a part cargo, the remainder of which was to be discharged at another part, and asked whether such a vessel, coming say from the River Plate with a part cargo to be discharged in Copenhagen, and landing the first portion in an English port, would be subject to seizure in the same way as if she brought a cargo of sugar to an English port. It was a most important point, and one which did not arise in the case of cattle. He hoped, therefore, the Chancellor of the Exchequer would make some statement in relation to the subject.

*MR. RITCHIE was understood to say that not being a lawyer he could not give an opinion on the point of law, but what he imagined would happen in such a case as that referred to, was that although liable to forfeiture, it would be dealt with, without any fine or penalty of any kind, under Section 209, and would not be interfered with in any way.

MR. BRYCE instanced the case of a cargo for the Argentine and another for this country. Technically, it would be brought into the United Kingdom and become subject to the order, although it was never intended to be landed here. He asked whether that was not a matter to be dealt with by instructions to the Customs officials. If the regulations were such as to prevent the part cargo being discharged and the vessel allowed to continue her voyage to the other port, the operations of merchants would be seriously interfered with. If the Chancellor of the Exchequer could state that no obstacle would be put in the way of such a vessel coming into a British port so long as she did not attempt to land her cargo, it would relieve the difficulty.

*MR. RITCHIE said that if such a case occurred, so far as his power was concerned, he would endeavour to secure that it was dealt with without inconvenience to the ship concerned.

MR. LOUGH recognised the disposition of the right hon. Gentleman to make a genial arrangement, but the great principle raised by the Amendment had not been met in the least degree. The Government were inaugurating a system of protection, in which this measure was the first step, and there ought to be fair protective laws. Recourse ought not to be had to a law passed twenty-five years ago in the era of free trade which did not contemplate present circumstances at all. He was sorry to see the Chancellor of the Exchequer, who was believed to be a free trader, lending the support of his good name to such a bad system. This sugar ought not to be forfeited, as no offence had been committed. Instead of such a stigma being thrown upon an importer, he should be told, "We have made new regulations, and you must go away." This was the easiest Amendment the Opposition had suggested, and if there was any disposition to do so the Government could very well meet them.

SIR JOHN GORST said the President of the Board of Trade had declared that the Bill was not to go one inch beyond the Convention. But this proposal distinctly went beyond the Convention, because, whereas the Convention contemplated only countervailing duties or prohibition, this provision contemplated forfeiture in addition.

*MR. RITCHIE said he was really astonished at his right hon. friend, a lawyer, assuming that they could enact a law prohibiting the entry of certain goods without providing means for carrying the law into force. Such a position was totally indefensible. With regard to goods in transit, he desired to correct his previous statement. He did not think any regulation would be necessary, because the Act would not apply to goods in transit.

Question put.

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 171 ; Noes, 76. (Division List, No. 218.)

AYES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bailey, James (*Walworth*)
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (*Manch'r*
Balfour, Rt Hn Gerald W. (*Leeds*
Balfour, Kenneth R. (*Christch*
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Beach, Rt. Hon. Sir M. Hicks
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bigwood, James
Bill, Charles
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Bowles, T. Gibson (*Lynn Regis*
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Bull, William James
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Butcher, John George
Campbell J. H. M (*Dublin Univ.*
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, R. F. (*N. Lancs.*)
Cavendish, V. C. W. (*Derbyshire*
Chamberlain, Rt. Hon, J. (*Birm.*
Chamberlain, Rt Hn J. A. (*Worc.*
Charrington, Spencer
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Coghill, Douglas Harry
Cohen, Benjamin Louis
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Chas. Ready
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Corbett, A. Cameron (*Glasgow*
Corbett, T. L. (*Down, North*)
Cox, Irwin Edwd. Bainbridge
Craig, Charles Curtis (*Antrim, S.*
Cripps, Charles Alfred
Crossley, Sir Savile

Dalkeith, Earl of
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dimsdale, Rt. Hon. Sir Jos. C.
Doughty, George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Duke, Henry Edward
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Faber, Edmund B. (*Hants, W.*)
Faber, George Denison (*York*)
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson, Rt Hn. Sir J. (*Manc'r*
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Finlay, Sir Robert Bannatyne
Fisher, William Hayes
Flannery, Sir Fortescue
Flower, Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster, P. S. (*Warwick, S. W.*
Fyler, John Arthur
Gardner, Ernest
Gibbs, Hn. A. G. H (*City of Lond*)
Godson, Sir Augustus Frederick
Gordon, Hn. J. E. (*Elgin & Nairn*
Gordon, J. (*Londonderry, S.*)
Gore, Hn G R. C. Ormsby- (*Salop*
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Greene, W. Raymond (*Cambs*
Groves, James Grimble
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Hall, Edward Marshall
Hamilton, Rt Hn Ld. G. (*Midx*
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Haslett, Sir James Horner
Hatch, Ernest Frederick G.
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, James (*Staffs., N. W.*)
Heaton, John Henniker
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hogg, Lindsay

Houston, Robert Paterson
Howard, J. (*Midd., Tott'ham*
Jameson, Major J. Eustace
Jeffreys, Rt. Hn. Arthur Fred
Johnstone, Heywood
Kemp, Lieut.-Colonel George
Keswick, William
Lambton, Hon. Fredk. Wm.
Law, Andrew Bonar (*Glasgow*)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (*Liverpool*
Lawson, John Grant (*Yorks, N. R*
Lees, Sir Elliott (*Birkenhead*)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N. S.
Llewellyn, Evan Henry
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Rt. Hn. W. (*Bristol, S.*)
Lowe, Francis William
Lowther, C. (*Cumb., Eskdale*)
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas, Reginald J. (*Portsmouth*)
Lyttelton, Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
M'Arthur, Charles (*Liverpool*)
Melville, Beresford Valentine
Milvain, Thomas
Montagu, Hon. J. Scott (*Hants.*
Moon, Edward Robert Pacy
Morgan, D. J. (*Walthamstow*)
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
Murray, Rt Hn A. Graham (*Bute*
Murray, Charles J. (*Coventry*)
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Palmer, Walter (*Salisbury*)
Percy, Earl
Pierpoint, Robert
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Walter R.
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward

Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Rankin, Sir James
Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
Rattigan, Sir William Henry
Reid, James (*Greenock*)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Renshaw, Sir Charles Bine
Renwick, George
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. Chas. Thomson
Roberts, Samuel (*Sheffield*)
Robertson, Herbert (*Hackney*)
Rolleston, Sir John F. L.
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sandys, Lt.-Col. Thos. Myles
Sharpe, William Edward T.
Shaw-Stewart, M. H. (*Renfrew*
Sinclair, Louis (*Romford*)
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, Jas. Parker (*Lanarks.*)
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (*Strand*)
Spear, John Ward
Spencer, Sir E. (*W. Bromwich*)
Stanley, Edw. Jas. (*Somerset*)
Stanley, Lord (*Lancs.*)
Stroyan, John
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
Talbot, Lord E. (*Chichester*)
Taylor, Austin (*East Toxteth*)
Thornton, Percy M.
Valentia, Viscount
Walrond, Rt. Hon. Sir W. H.
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Webb, Col. William George
Williams, RtHnJ Powell-(*Birm*
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wilson-Todd, Sir W. H. (*Yorks.*)
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (*Bath*
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Asher, Alexander
Ashton, Thomas Gair
Asquith, Rt. Hon. Herbt Hy
Bayley, Thomas (*Derbyshire*)
Bell, Richard
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Brigg, John
Broadhurst, Henry
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Burt, Thomas
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Causton, Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Cremer, William Randal
Crooks, William
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (*Lanark*)
Elibank, Master of
Emmott, Alfred
Fenwick, Charles
Foster, Sir Walter (*Derby Co.*
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert J.
Griffith, Ellis J.
Harmsworth, R. Leicester
Harwood, George
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Chas. Seale-
Hayter, Rt. Hon. Sir ArthurD.
Henderson, Arthur (*Durham*)
Horniman, Frederick John
Humphreys-Owen, Arthur C.
Hutchinson, Dr. CharlesFredk.
Hutton, Alfred E. (*Morley*)
Jacoby, James Alfred
Jones, Wm. (*Carnarvonshire*)
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kilbride, Denis
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (*Cornwall*)
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
M'Arthur, William (*Cornwall*)
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Markham, Arthur Basil
Moss, Samuel
Nussey, Thomas Willans
Partington, Oswald
Paulton, James Mellor
Pearson, Sir Weetman D.
Price, Robert John
Priestley, Arthur
Rea, Russell
Rickett, J. Compton
Rigg, Richard
Roberts, John Bryn (*Eifion*)
Roberts, John H. (*Denbighs.*)
Robertson, Edmund (*Dundee*)
Robson, William Snowdon
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rose, Charles Day
Samuel, Herbt. L. (*Cleveland*)
Shackleton, David James
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Spencer, RtHn C R. (*Northants*
Sullivan, Donal
Taylor, Theodore C. (*Radcliffe*)
Thomas, F. Freeman-(*Hastings*
Tomkinson, James
Toulmin, George
Ure, Alexander
Walton, J. Lawson (*Leeds, S.*)
Warner, Thos. Courtenay T.
White, Luke (*York, E. R.*)
Whiteley, G. (*York, W. R.*)
Whitley, J. H. (*Halifax*)

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Lough and Mr. Runciman

MR. LOUGH said he desired to move the Amendment standing in the name of his hon. friend the Member for Loughborough. To him it did not seem to be necessary to make all those costly inquiries with regard to sugar which was only in transit. This question affected this country more than any other country, for England had been called the carrying nation of the world. He did not think they ought to go one single step further in the imposition of restrictions on the shipping trade than was absolutely necessary. It would have been much better if the Government had been satisfied with confirming the present law, which would have been sufficient for all purposes. Sugar in transit should be free from all restrictions. He wished to know if a barge came down the Elbe with 1,000 tons of sugar, some from Austria and some from Germany, consigned to one hundred different people in the United Kingdom, would there have to be one hundred certificates of origin, and would the sugar have to be traced to all the places from whence it came? At present a bill of lading, say from Hamburg to Hull, was all that was necessary, and that ought to be sufficient He begged to move.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 2, line 2, to leave out the words 'whether in transit or otherwise,' and insert the words 'except sugar in transit.'"—(*Mr. Lough.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the clause."

MR. GERALD BALFOUR opposed the Amendment on the ground that it was necessary to take this power of requiring certificates of origin to carry out the provisions of Article VIII. of the Convention. For that reason he should resist the Amendment.

SIR CHARLES DILKE said the answer of the President of the Board of Trade, with which he was disposed to agree, showed the enormous danger this new system would expose the trade to. He believed that under this Bill they were bound to introduce some system of this kind and apply it to all goods in transit. This showed that we should have to resuscitate our old Customs system in all its horrors, as a consequence of interference with British trade.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES said the second Article, concerning the certificates of origin, in the findings of the permanent Commission, said that bounty-fed sugar might be admitted in transit. This had been translated "shall be" admitted. There did not seem to be anyone in the Foreign Office who could translate French. There were no fewer than seven articles specifying in the most minute detail the sort of certificate of origin that would be required. There was thus set up a system of certificates of origin which had failed all over the world, and wherever it had been tried it had always been given up as a failure. It was notorious that under a similar system a very large quantity of timber from Canada had been grown in Norway, sent over to Canada, and afterwards re-shipped to this country. Again, the certificate of origin was a document of an extremely complicated character, and the Government had not yet decided what form the certificate should take. This was a very serious matter to those engaged in trade.

MR. BRYCE also called attention to the extreme minuteness of these Articles. As he understood the view of the Government, it was that whatever this permanent Commission chose to say must be done, in order to carry out Article VIII, we were bound to do. They might impose a very heavy burden upon this country. He could not see the necessity for this elaborate provision. The system was bound to cause an immense amount of trouble. It would be a sample of what this country would have to undergo if there was any departure from its system of free trade.

MR. RUNCIMAN asked the President of the Board of Trade to give some reason why it was necessary to demand certificates of origin when sugar was passing through open ports for purposes of transhipment. The right hon. Gentleman had referred them to Article VIII of the Convention, which provided that—

> "The high contracting parties engage, for themselves and for their colonies or possessions, exception being made in the case of the self-governing colonies of Great Britain and the British East Indies, to take the necessary measures to prevent bounty-fed sugar, which has passed in transit through the territory of a contracting state, from enjoying the benefits of the Convention in the market to which it is being sent."

He failed to see what could be the use of demanding certificates of origin merely for the purpose of carrying out the provisions of that Article, which did not throw any responsibility upon this country to prevent bounty-fed sugar from entering any of our ports. The right hon. Gentleman apparently did not fully realise how important were the transhipments in the United Kingdom. They ran to an enormous tonnage. Cargoes were brought in large ships for transhipment into a great fleet of smaller vessels, and the cargoes were delivered all over the world. The right hon. Gentleman was throwing obstacles in the way of transhipments, and was going to put a premium upon fraud. If the Bill went through in its present form, the certificate of origin would not be worth the paper on which it was printed. The right hon. Gentleman would throw every obstacle in the way of distributing goods from the ports of this country, which would amount to a restraint of English trade, and would add to the disadvantages under which the country would labour through this Convention.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE said they were bound by the findings mentioned on page 12. Certificates of origin must accompany all sugar, although a certain discretion was left as to the form of the certificate. The whole transhipment must take place under the eye of the Customs authorities, and this country was bound by this arrangement to that objectionable system.

Mr. LAWSON WALTON said that as he read the provisions of the Convention on page 12 they did not seem to apply at all except to sugar which entered the United Kingdom. Not only so, but they were limited to sugar for certain specified purposes. He thought there would be no difficulty in dealing with that large class of sugar to which reference had been made, which was brought into British ports on vessels merely calling for orders and on their way to European ports.

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR repeated that it was impossible for him to accept the Amendment.

*Sir CHARLES DILKE said the Commission had decided that certificates of origin must accompany all sugar imported into the contracting States, and rules had been laid down in regard to this matter.

Mr. LOUGH said the President of the Board of Trade had mixed up the findings of the permanent Commission with the Convention itself. If the permanent Commission went further in their findings than the Convention required, they had no authority, and he had no respect for them whatever. Judging by the findings it seemed to him that they had left undone those things which they ought to have done, and done those things which they ought not to have done. The first duty they had to perform was to give information with regard to the sugar trade of the world and the bounty-fed sugar of various countries, but they had not given a scrap of information. The Foreign Office had supplied the bit of information given at the end of the findings. The duties of the Commission were set out in Article VII, and there was nothing there authorising them to fix the laws under which sugar should be sent in transit through this or any other country. The Commission were really not a judicial body as they ought to be. They were a cartel o: protectionists who were trying to set up a system which would destroy the free-trade institutions of this country.

Mr. SYDNEY BUXTON said the Committee were in a very difficult position. He thought they might appeal to the law officers of the Crown to give some light on the matter. There was great difference of legal opinion on the matter and he did not think it was treating the Committee rightly to leave the interpretation of the clause to the right hon. Gentleman. They were entitled to have an opinion from the Attorney-General or the Solicitor-General. It was perfectly clear from the wording of the Article that there was very great confusion as to its meaning. If our transport and transit trade was to be jeopardised by the findings of the Commission, the right hon. Gentleman should bring the facts and particulars before them and show how our trade would be injured.

Mr. ROBSON said it was difficult to see from the Convention itself how there was any necessity for such a sub-section being imposed on any of the contracting States. It enacted that sugar passing in transit should produce a certificate of origin. He turned to the Convention to see where any provision of that nature was made.

Mr. GERALD BALFOUR said the Convention enabled regulations to be made.

Mr. ROBSON said he took that correction, if it was a correction, but it did not affect the substance of his argument at all. He understood that the right hon. Gentleman referred to Article VII, but it imposed no such obligation on the Government. It said—

> "The high contracting parties engage, for themselves and for their colonies or possessions, exception being made in the case of the self-governing colonies of Great Britain and the British East Indies, to take the necessary measures to prevent bounty-fed sugar, which has passed in transit through the territory of a contracting State, from enjoying the benefits of the Convention in the market to which it is being sent. The permanent Commission shall make the necessary proposals with regard to this matter."

He should like an explanation of what was meant by "the benefits of the Convention in the market to which it is being sent." It appeared to him that it was meaningless so far as England was concerned. It might have some remote connection with the benefit of the surtax, or something of that kind, in other countries. The President of the Board of Trade did not seem to be able to point out what it meant. How could they carry out the object of that Article by saying to an importer of bounty-fed sugar, "Where do you come from?" and then, when he told them, allowing him to pass on. They did not, by putting that question, prevent his sugar from enjoying the benefits of the market to which it was being sent. Whoever drafted the Bill ought to be able to explain in what way he meant this subsection to carry out that Article. The Parliamentary Secretary to the Board of Trade, who had not taken a very active or aggressive part in the debate, might be permitted by his official superiors to give some explanation of the Bill, and to state how the object of the article could be carried out by this sub-section.

MR. GIBSON BOWLES said it seemed to him impossible to carry out the article without having certificates of origin.

MR. RUNCIMAN asked whether certificates of origin were necessary for goods in course of transhipment. The question was of the utmost importance.

MR. WHITLEY asked the President of the Board of Trade whether he could give an estimate of the cost which would be involved in supervising these questions at all the ports in the United Kingdom. He was informed that thousands of men would have to be added to the staff of the Customs to carry out this provision.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE said one of the greatest grievances which our traders had against the laws of France had been the *Sur-tax d'entrepot*, which was an additional tax on sea-borne goods that passed through a foreign country on their way to France. This Bill would virtually impose that tax on goods which passed by this country on their way to foreign countries.

MR. BRYCE appealed to the President of the Board of Trade to reply. He said this Bill would make the Convention part of the law of England, and they were entitled to know what the Convention meant.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR said he had expressed his opinion more than once on this subject. Under Article VIII certain obligations were placed on the contracting Powers, and in respect of those obligations the permanent Commission were to make the necessary proposals. They had made those proposals, and the effect of them appeared to him, and also to the right hon. Baronet the Member for the Forest of Dean, to make it necessary for us, in certain contingencies at all events, to require certificates of origin in the case of sugar in transit. Even if this country was not absolutely bound by the proposals of the permanent Commission, those proposals must be taken into serious consideration, and, whether these powers were ultimately exercised or not, it was necessary to take them in order to enable us to carry out those proposals.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 168; Noes, 70. (Division List No. 219.)

AYES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bailey, James (*Walworth*)
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (*Manch'r*
Balfour, Rt. Hn Gerald W (*Leeds*
Balfour, Kenneth R. (*Christch.*
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bigwood, James
Bill, Charles
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Bowles, T. Gibson (*Lynn Regis*)
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Bull, William James
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Butcher, John George
Campbell, J. H. M. (*Dublin Univ*
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, R. F. (*N. Lancs.*)
Cavendish, V C W (*Derbysh.*)
Cecil, Evelyn (*Aston Manor*)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J. (*Birm.*
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn J A (*Worc*)

Mr. Robson.

Charrington, Spencer
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Collings, Rt. Hn. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Charles Ready
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Corbett, A. Cameron (*Glasg.*)
Corbett, T. L. (*Down, North*
Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge
Craig, Charles Curtis (*Antrim, S*
Crossley, Sir Savile
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dimsdale, Rt. Hn. Sir Joseph C.
Doughty, George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers
Duke, Henry Edward
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Faber, Edmund B. (*Hants., W*
Faber, George Denison (*York*)
Fellowes, Hn. Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson, Rt Hn. Sir J. (*Manc'r*
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Fisher, William Hayes
Flower, Ernest
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Philip S. (*Warwick, S. W*
Fyler, John Arthur
Galloway, William Johnson
Gibbs, Hn. A. G. H. (*City of Lond.*
Godson, Sir Augustus Frederick
Gordon, J. (*Londonderry, South*
Gordon, Maj. Evans (*T'r. H'ml'ts*
Gore, Hn G. R. C. Ormsby- (*Salop*
Goulding, Edward Alfred
Greene, W. Raymond- (*Cambs.*
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Groves, James Grimble
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Hall, Edward Marshall
Hamilton, Rt. Hn. Ld. G. (*Mid'x*
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Hatch, Ernest Frederick G.
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, James (*Staffords. N. W*
Heaton, John Henniker
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hogg, Lindsay
Howard, J. (*Midd., Tottenham*
Jameson, Major J. Eustace
Jeffreys, Rt. Hn. Arthur Fred
Johnstone, Heywood
Kemp, Lieut.-Colonel George
Keswick, William
Lambton, Hn. Frederick Wm.
Law, Andrew Bonar (*Glasgow*
Lawrence, Sir Joseph (*Monm'th*
Lawrence, Wm. F. (*Liverpool*
Lawson, Jn. Grant (*Yorks. N. R.*
Lees, Sir Elliott (*Birkenhead*)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N. S.
Llewellyn, Evan Henry
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Rt. Hn. W. (*Bristol, S.*
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Francis William
Lowther, C. (*Cumb. Eskdale*)
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas, Reginald J. (*Portsmouth*
Lyttelton, Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
M'Arthur, Charles (*Liverpool*)
M'Killop, W. (*Sligo, North*)
Melville, Beresford Valentine
Milvain, Thomas
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
Montagu, G. (*Huntingdon*)
Morgan, D. J. (*Walthamstow*)
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
Murray, Rt Hn A. Graham (*Bute*
Murray, Charles J. (*Coventry*)
Nicholson, William Graham
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Palmer, Walter (*Salisbury*)
Percy, Earl
Pierpoint, Robert
Plummer, Walter R.
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Rankin, Sir James
Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
Reid, James (*Greenock*)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Renshaw, Sir Charles Bine
Renwick, George
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. Chas. Thomson
Roberts, Samuel (*Sheffield*)
Robertson, Herbert (*Hackney*)
Rolleston, Sir John F. L.
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sandys, Lt.-Col. Thos. Myles
Seely, Maj. J. E. B. (*Isle of Wight*
Shaw-Stewart, M. H. (*Renfrew*
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, James Parker (*Lanarks.*
Smith, Hn. W. F. D. (*Strand*)
Spear, John Ward
Spencer, Sir E. (*W. Bromwich*)
Stanley, Edw. Jas. (*Somerset*)
Stanley, Lord (*Lancs.*)
Stroyan, John
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
Talbot, Lord E. (*Chichester*)
Taylor, Austin (*East Toxteth*
Thornton, Percy M.
Valentia, Viscount
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt. Hn. Sir Wm. H.
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Webb, Colonel William George
Whitmore, Charles Algernon
Williams, Rt Hn J Powell (*Birm*
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wilson-Todd, Sir W. H. (*Yorks.*
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (*Bath*
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Asher, Alexander
Asquith, Rt. Hon. Herbt. Hy.
Bayley, Thomas (*Derbyshire*)
Bell, Richard
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Brigg, John
Broadhurst, Henry
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Buchanan, Thomas Ryburn
Buxton, Sydney Charles
Caldwell, James
Causton, Richard Knight
Cawley, Frederick
Cremer, William Randal
Devlin, Joseph (*Kilkenny, N.*)
Doogan, P. C.
Douglas, Charles M. (*Lanark*
Elibank, Master of
Emmott, Alfred
Fenwick, Charles
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert J.
Griffith, Ellis J.
Harmsworth, R. Leicester
Harwood, George
Hayne, Rt. Hn. Charles Seale-
Hayter, Rt. Hn. Sir Arthur D.
Horniman, Frederick John
Hutchinson, Dr. Charles Fredk.
Hutton, Alfred E. (*Morley*)
Jacoby, James Alfred
Jones, Wm. (*Carnarvonshire*)
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kilbride, Denis
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (*Cornwall*)
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lough, Thomas
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Arthur, William (*Cornwall*
M'Kenna, Reginald
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Markham, Arthur Basil
Moss, Samuel
Nussey, Thomas Willans
Partington, Oswald
Paulton, James Mellor
Pearson, Sir Weetman D.
Price, Robert John
Priestley, Arthur
Rea, Russell
Rickett, J. Compton
Rigg, Richard
Roberts, John Bryn (*Eifion*)
Roberts, John H. (*Denbighs.*)
Robson, William Snowdon
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rose, Charles Day

Runciman, Walter
Samuel, Herbt. L. (*Cleveland*)
Shackleton, David James
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Spencer, Rt Hn C. R (*Northants*
Taylor, Theodore C. (*Radcliffe*)
Thomas, F. Freeman (*Hastings*
Tomkinson, James
Toulmin, George
Ure, Alexander
Walton, J. Lawson (*Leeds, S.*)
White, Luke (*York, E.R.*)
Whiteley, G. (*York, W. R.*)

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—
Mr. Warner and Mr. Whitley.

MR. GERALD BALFOUR rose in his place, and claimed to move, "That the Question, 'That Clause 1 stand part of the Bill' be now put."

Question put.

"That the Question 'That Clause 1 stand part of the Bill' be now put."

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 156; Noes, 65. (Division List No. 220.)

AYES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bailey, James (*Walworth*)
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (*Manch'r*
Balfour, Rt Hn Gerald W. (*Leeds*
Balfour, Kenneth R. (*Christch.*
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bigwood, James
Bill, Charles
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Bull, William James
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Butcher, John George
Campbell, J. H. M (*Dublin Univ*
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, R. F. (*N. Lancs.*)
Cavendish, V. C. W. (*Derbyshire*
Cecil, Evelyn (*Aston Manor*)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J. (*Birm.*
Chamberlain, Rt Hn. A. J (*Worc*
Charrington, Spencer
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hn. Thos. H. A. E.
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Charles Ready
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Corbett, A. Cameron (*Glasg.*)
Corbett, T. L. (*Down, North*
Cox, Irwin Edwd. Bainbridge
Craig, Charles Curtis (*Antrim, S*
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dimsdale, Rt. Hon. Sir Joseph C.
Doughty, George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Faber, Edmund B. (*Hants., W.*
Faber, George Denison (*York*
Fellowes, Hn. Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson, Rt. Hn Sir J. (*Manc'r*
Finch, Rt. Hn. George H.
Fisher, William Hayes
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Philip S. (*Warwick, S. W*
Fyler, John Arthur
Galloway, William Johnson
Gibbs, Hn. A. G. H. (*City of Lond*
Godson, Sir Augustus Fredk.
Gordon, J. (*Londonderry, South*
Gordon, Maj Evans (*T'r H'ml'ts*
Gore, Hn. G. R. C. Ormsby (*Salop*
Greene, W. Raymond (*Cambs*
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Groves, James Grimble
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Hall, Edward Marshall
Hamilton, Rt Hn. Ld. G (*Midd'x*
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Hatch, Ernest Frederick Geo.
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, James (*Staff's., N. W.*)
Heaton, John Henniker
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hogg, Lindsay
Howard, J. (*Midd., Tottenham*
Jameson, Major J. Eustace
Jeffreys, Rt. Hn. Arthur Fred.
Keswick, William
Lambton, Hon. Fredk. Wm.
Law, Andrew Bonar (*Glasgow*
Lawrence, Sir Joseph (*Monm'th*
Lawrence, Wm. F. (*Liverpool*)
Lawson, John Grant (*Yorks. N R*
Lees, Sir Elliott (*Birkenhead*)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N. S.
Llewellyn, Evan Henry
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Rt. Hn. W. (*Bristol, S*
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Francis William
Lowther, C. (*Cumb., Eskdale*)
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas, Reginald J. (*Portsmouth*
Lyttelton, Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
M'Arthur, Charles (*Liverpool*)
M'Iver, Sir Lewis (*Edinburgh W*
Milvain, Thomas
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
Montagu, G. (*Huntingdon*)
Morgan, D. J. (*Walthamstow*)
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
Murray, Rt Hn A. Graham (*Bute*
Murray, Charles J. (*Coventry*)
Nicholson, William Graham
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Palmer, Walter (*Salisbury*)
Percy, Earl
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Walter R.
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Rankin, Sir James
Rasch, Major Frederic Carne
Reid, James (*Greenock*)
Remnant, Jas. Farquharson
Renwick, George
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. Chas. Thomson
Roberts, Samuel (*Sheffield*)
Robertson, Herbert (*Hackney*
Rolleston, Sir John F. L.
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Round, Rt. Hon. James
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sandys, Lt.-Col. Thos. Myles
Seely, Maj J. E. B. (*Isle of Wight*
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, James Parker (*Lanarks*
Smith, Hn. W. F. D. (*Strand*)
Spear, John Ward
Spencer, Sir E. (*W. Bromwich*
Stanley, Edw. Jas. (*Somerset*)
Stanley, Lord (*Lancs.*)
Stroyan, John
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Sturt, Hn. Humphry Napier
Talbot, Lord E. (*Chichester*)
Taylor, Austin (*East Toxteth*)
Thornton, Percy M.
Valentia, Viscount
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt. Hon. Sir W. H.
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Webb, Col. William George
Williams, Rt. Hn J Powell (*Birm*
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wilson-Todd, Sir W. H. (*Yorks*
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (*Bath*
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—
Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Asher, Alexander
Asquith, Rt. Hon. Herbt. Hy.
Bayley, Thomas (*Derbyshire*
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Brigg, John
Broadhurst, Henry
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Caldwell, James
Causton, Richard Knight
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Cremer, William Randal
Dalkeith, Earl of
Devlin, Joseph (*Kilkenny, N.*)
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Elibank, Master of
Emmott, Alfred
Fenwick, Charles
Griffith, Ellis J.
Harmsworth, R. Leicester
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Chas. Seale-
Hayter, Rt. Hn. Sir Arthur D.
Horniman, Frederick John
Hutton, Alfred E. (*Morley*)
Jones, William (*Carnarvonsh.*
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kemp, Lieut.-Colonel George
Kilbride, Denis
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (*Cornwall*
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lough, Thomas
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Kenna, Reginald
M'Killop, W. (*Sligo, North*)
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Markham, Arthur Basil
Moss, Samuel
Nussey, Thomas Willans
Partington, Oswald
Paulton, James Mellor
Pearson, Sir Weetman D.
Price, Robert John
Priestley, Arthur
Rea, Russell
Rickett, J. Compton
Rigg, Richard
Roberts, John Bryn (*Eifion*)
Roberts, John H. (*Denbighs*)
Robson, William Snowdon
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rose, Charles Day
Samuel, Herbert L. (*Cleveland*
Shackleton, David James
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Spencer,Rt.HnC.R(*Northants*
Taylor, Theodore C. (*Radcliffe*
Thomas, F. Freeman(*Hastings*)
Tomkinson, James
Toulmin, George
Ure, Alexander
Walton, J. Lawson (*Leeds, S.*
Warner, Thos. Courtenay T.
White, Luke (*York, E. R.*)
Whiteley, G. (*York, W. R.*)
Whitley, J. H. (*Halifax*)

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—
Mr. Herbert Gladstone and
Mr. William M'Arthur.

Question put accordingly, "That Clause 1 stand part of the Bill."

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 154; Noes, 65. (Division List No. 221.)

AYES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bailey, James (*Walworth*)
Balfour,Rt.Hon.A.J(*Manch'r.*
Balfour,Rt.HnGeraldW(*Leeds*
Balfour, Kenneth R. (*Christch.*
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bhownaggree, Sir M. M.
Bigwood, James
Bill, Charles
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Bull, William James
Burdett-Coutts, W.
Butcher, John George
Campbell,J.H.M.(*Dublin Univ*
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, R. F. (*N. Lancs.*)
Cavendish,V.C.W.(*Derbyshire*
Cecil, Evelyn (*Aston Manor*)
Chamberlain,Rt.Hon.J(*Birm.*
Chamberlain,RtHnJ.A(*Worc.*
Charrington, Spencer
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb,SirJohnCharlesReady
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Corbett,A.Cameron (*Glasgow*)
Corbett, T. L. (*Down North*)
Cox, Irwin Edward Bainbridge
Craig,CharlesCurtis(*Antrim,S*
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Dickson, Charles Scott
Dimsdale,Rt.Hon.SirJosephC.
Doughty, George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers-
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Faber,Edmund B. (*Hants, W.*)
Faber, George Denison (*York*)
Fellowes,Hon.AilwynEdward
Fergusson,RtHnSirJ.(*Manc'r.*
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Fisher, William Hayes
Forster, Henry William
Foster, P. S. (*Warwick, S.W.*
Fyler, John Arthur
Galloway, William Johnson
Gibbs,Hn.A.G.H(*City of Lond.*
Godson,SirAugustusFrederick
Gordon,J.(*Londonderry,South*
Gordon,Maj Evans (*Tr.H'ml'ts*
Gore,HnG.R.C.Ormsby-(*Salop*
Greene, W. Raymond- (*Cambs*
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Groves, James Grimble
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Hall, Edward Marshall
Hamilton, Rt Hn Ld.G.(*Midx*
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Hatch, Ernest Frederick Geo.
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath,James (*Staffords. N.W.*
Heaton, John Henniker
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Hogg, Lindsay
Howard, J.(*Midd., Tottenham*)
Jameson, Major J. Eustace
Jeffreys, Rt. Hon. Arthur Fred.
Keswick, William
Lambton, Hon. Fredk. Wm.
Law, Andrew Bonar (*Glasgow*
Lawrence, Sir Jos. (*Monm'th*)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (*Liverpool*)
Lawson,JohnGrant(*Yorks.NR*
Lees, Sir Elliott (*Birkenhead*
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower,FrederickN.S
Llewellyn, Evan Henry
Lockwood, Lieut-Col. A. R.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long,Rt.Hn.Walter(*Bristol,S*
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Francis William
Lowther, C. (*Cumb. Eskdale*)
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas,Reginald J.(*Portsmouth*
Lyttelton, Hon. Alfred
Macdona, John Cumming
M'Arthur, Charles (*Liverpool*)
M'Iver,SirLewis(*Edinburgh W*
Milvain, Thomas
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
Montagu, G. (*Huntingdon*)
Morgan,DavidJ(*Walthamstow*
Morton, Arthur H. Aylmer
Mount, William Arthur
Murray,RtHnA.Graham(*Bute*
Murray, Charles J. (*Coventry*)
Nicholson, William Graham
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Palmer, Walter (*Salisbury*)
Percy, Earl
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Walter R.
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Rankin, Sir James
Reid, James (*Greenock*)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Renwick, George
Ritchie,Rt.Hn.Chas.Thomson
Roberts, Samuel (*Sheffield*)
Robertson, Herbert (*Hackney*)
Rolleston, Sir John F. L.
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Round, Rt. Hon. James

Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sandys, Lt.-Col. Thos. Myles
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, Abel H. (*Hertford, East*)
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (*Strand*)
Spear, John Ward
Spencer, Sir E. (*W. Bromwich*)
Stanley, Edward Jas. (*Somerset*
Stanley, Lord (*Lancs.*
Stroyan, John
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
Talbot, Lord E. (*Chichester*)
Taylor, Austin (*East Toxteth*)
Thornton, Percy M.
Valentia, Viscount
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt Hon Sir William H.
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Webb, Colonel William George
Williams, Rt Hn J Powell-(*Birm*
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wilson-Todd, Sir W. H. (*Yorks.*
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (*Bath*
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George.
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Asher, Alexander
Asquith, Rt. Hon. Herbt. Hy
Bayley, Thomas (*Derbyshire*)
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Brigg, John
Broadhurst, Henry
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Caldwell, James
Causton, Richard Knight
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Cremer, William Randal
Dalkeith, Earl of
Devlin, Joseph (*Kilkenny, N.*)
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Elibank, Master of
Emmott, Alfred
Fenwick, Charles
Griffith, Ellis J.
Harmsworth, R. Leicester
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-
Hayter, Rt. Hon. Sir Arthur D.
Horniman, Frederick John
Hutton, Alfred E. (*Morley*)
Jones, William (*Carnarv'nshire*
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kemp, Lieut.-Colonel George
Kilbride, Denis
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (*Cornwall*)
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lough, Thomas
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Kenna, Reginald
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Markham, Arthur Basil
Moss, Samuel
Nussey, Thomas Willans
Partington, Oswald
Paulton, James Mellor
Pearson, Sir Weetman D.
Price, Robert John
Priestley, Arthur
Rea, Russell
Rickett, J. Compton
Rigg, Richard
Roberts, John Bryn (*Eifion*)
Roberts, John H. (*Denbighs.*)
Robson, William Snowdon
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rose, Charles Day
Runciman, Walter
Samuel, Herbert L. (*Cleveland*)
Shackleton, David James
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Spencer, Rt Hn. C. R (*Northants*
Taylor, Theodore C. (*Radcliffe*
Thomas, F. Freeman (*Hastings*
Tomkinson, James
Toulmin, George
Ure, Alexander
Walton, J. Lawson (*Leeds, S.*)
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
White, Luke (*York, E. R.*)
Whiteley, G. (*York, W. R.*)
Whitley, J. H. (*Halifax*)

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Herbert Gladstone and Mr. William M'Arthur.

Clause 2.

*THE CHAIRMAN: All the Amendments to Clause 2 are out of order, as they suggest conditions outside the Convention, except the Amendment in the name of the hon. Member for West Islington, "In line 40 to leave out 'fifty' and insert 'five hundred.'"

*SIR CHARLES DILKE moved to omit the words "in the United Kingdom" from line 3, in order to ask what would be the position of the Isle of Man under this Bill. Foreign nations usually, and even our own representatives frequently, forgot the extraordinarily anomalous position of countries in the neighbourhood of the United Kingdom. Jersey and Guernsey were independent kingdoms, bound to this country simply by a personal union; they had a fiscal system of their own, over which we had no control whatever; they could grant bounties as they pleased and were entirely outside the scope of this Bill. The Isle of Man was not in that position. It was not a part of the United Kingdom, but yet we bound it and were bound for it. On the Order Paper was a Customs Bill applying the sugar duty of this year to the Isle of Man, and he took it that a similar course of introducing a separate Bill would have to be introduced with regard to this Sugar Convention. He asked whether that matter had been considered by the Government, whether it was proposed to follow the present Bill by a similar statute, and what would happen with regard to the Isle of Man until that second Bill was passed. In order to raise the point he begged to move.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 2, line 3, to leave out the words 'in the United Kingdom.'"—(*Sir Charles Dilke.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the clause."

SIR EDWARD CARSON had no hesitation in saying that the words

"United Kingdom" did not include the Isle of Man.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE said his point was that the words "United Kingdom" never included the Isle of Man for any purpose whatever, and that in connection with all matters of this kind a special Bill had to be passed for the Isle of Man. That being so, he desired to know whether the Government intended to introduce another Bill in this case.

*MR. RITCHIE said he was not certain whether it would be necessary, and, as the Amendment had not been placed on the Paper, he had had no opportunity of considering it. He had not the slightest doubt, however, that whatever obligations were placed on the United Kingdom by the Bill would be applied also to the Isle of Man.

SIR CHARLES DILKE: Then it will require a statute.

*MR. RITCHIE: If a statute is required it will be brought before the House, but I am not certain that one will be required.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE said there was no doubt that the words did not cover the Isle of Man, and that with regard to ordinary legislation it had always been necessary to pass a separate Act for the Isle of Man. He submitted that a similar course would have to be followed in this case.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

MR. WHITLEY asked whether the Committee were not entitled to ask on what grounds all the Amendments save one to the second clause had been ruled out of order.

THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN (Mr. JEFFREYS, Hampshire, N.), who was now in the Chair, said the matter could not now be raised as the ruling had been given and business proceeded with.

MR. BRYCE said it would be a convenience to the Committee for future guidance if they were told on what grounds the Amendments had been ruled out of order. Many of the Amendments *primâ facie* appeared to be in order. He had no doubt the Chairman of Committees had good reasons for his decision, but it would enlighten the Committee to know what they were.

*MR. RITCHIE said they could not discuss the reasons which had actuated the Chairman of Committees in giving his decision, but for his own part he conceived that the reason the Amendments were ruled out of order was that they were contrary to the Convention.

MR. LOUGH moved to substitute "500" for "50" in line 40. The clause provided that the maximum penalty for breach of the rules for carrying on the business of sugar refining should be £50. He thought the amount mentioned in his Amendment would be a more adequate penalty.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 2, line 40, to leave out the word 'fifty' and insert the words 'five hundred.'"—(*Mr. Lough.*)

*MR. RITCHIE said he did not think it was wise to have an excessive amount. He had consulted the Commissioners of Inland Revenue and they stated that they were satisfied that £50 was quite sufficient.

*MR. LOUGH asked leave to withdraw his Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

MR. LOUGH said he could quite understand why sugar factories on the Continent should be placed in bond because sugar factories abroad stood much in the same position as distilleries in this country. But in this country there was no production of sugar, and it seemed to him that there had been great negligence on the part of their representatives abroad in not making an arrangement, more suitable to the requirements of the United Kingdom, than that which had been embodied in this clause. Surely they might have had some arrangement which would have been less expensive, for they already had a very heavy duty on sugar.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer might very well have continued to take his revenue at the port. This was a point in this miserable business which showed how the interests of this country had been entirely neglected by the representatives of this country. He did not see the slightest necessity for any such arrangement, and no case whatever had been made out for the bonding of sugar factories in this country. It was unfortunate that the representatives of this country did not make some arrangement that would have been less expensive. He contended that our interests had not been properly guarded in so readily accepting these onerous arrangements, and he hoped they would express their feelings upon this matter by taking a division.

Mr. ROBSON said there seemed no reason why English sugar refiners' factories should be placed in bond at all. He could understand why this was necessary in the case of Germany or France where drawbacks were given on exportation, but nothing of that kind happened in this country. This clause contained a costly and irritating provision which was quite foreign to the habits of English trade, and it was also contrary to the general line of English legislation.

*Mr. RITCHIE said that the Convention could not be carried out without this clause. Whether rightly or wrongly, we were bound to carry out the Convention, and one of the terms of the Convention was that sugar-refining should be carried on in bond. As a matter of fact there were no sugar factories in this country, but there were on the Continent. In the new condition of things the duty would not be collected on the raw sugar, but on the refined sugar as it came out of the factory. One of the conditions was that the duty should be levied on the refined sugar so that there could be no question at all of any bounty. It was perfectly true that but for this Convention they might have gone on without supervision, but so far as the sugar refiners themselves were concerned, he did not understand that there was the least complaint as to the conditions under which they would in the future have to carry on their work.

Mr. BRYCE said that no doubt the Chancellor of the Exchequer had given a valid reason why what had been agreed to in the Convention should be embodied in the Bill, but surely it would have been only proper for our negotiator to have had a provision inserted to meet the case of England, instead of imposing conditions which were annoying and vexatious to them.

Mr. MANSFIELD (Lincolnshire, Spalding) said that after the explanation given by the Chancellor of the Exchequer he did not feel so strongly on the subject. Penalties of the kind proposed were more suitable for anarchists than for people carrying on a lawful trade. He thought the sugar refiners ought to have had some opportunity of giving their views before such clauses, which went so far to revolutionise the existing state of things, were introduced.

Mr. LEVY (Leicestershire, Loughborough) said it seemed to him that the rules proposed were too drastic. If a man wanted to continue, or to start, in the trade he would have to go to the Commissioners and ask to be allowed to do so. He did not think people should have to do this in order to carry on what was a legitimate trade. It was especially hard that they should be called upon to do so in this country, where raw sugar was not produced. In his opinion there was absolutely no justification for putting on this embargo.

Mr. WHITLEY said the Chancellor of the Exchequer had informed them that this clause was imposed by the Convention. He supposed the right hon. Gentleman meant the permanent Commission. He thought it would have been very much more proper if, instead of starting the clause "His Majesty may by Order in Council" do so and so, the words had been "When instructed by the permanent Commission in Brussels, His Majesty shall" do so and so, for that was the real state of the case. He really thought the House should adjourn after passing a vote of thanks to the permanent Commission in Brussels for doing their legislation for them. It would be for their convenience if the Chancellor of the Exchequer would explain whether the words in italics would interfere with the power of himself or his successor to propose a remission of the existing sugar duties.

MR. RUNCIMAN said the clause made further restrictions on our trade. In drawing attention to Sub-section C, in which provision was made for the processes of manufacture to be open to the officers of the Commission, he said he could quite conceive that the processes of manufacture might in the immediate future be very much improved, and it might not be possible for the refiner to patent the process. Secrecy would be impossible to him under the sub-section, since the officers of the Commission might see the process, and take all particulars of it, and such secrecy as the manufacturer had been able to obtain in the past would be entirely gone. As to the last sub-section of the clause, which dealt not only with heavy penalties in the event of the Act being infringed, but also provided for the forfeiture of the articles used in the process of manufacture, he declared that from beginning to end the penalties were so drastic as to be almost absurd. The refineries would also be open to the inspection of the representatives of the Home Office. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had stated that the refiners did not object to these regulations. He could well understand that, for they were getting a particularly good bargain out of the Bill.

Motion made, and Question put, "That the clause stand part of the Bill."

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 144; Noes, 59. (Division List No. 222.)

AYES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bailey, James (*Walworth*)
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (*Manch'r*
Balfour, RtHn. Gerald W (*Leeds*
Balfour, Kenneth R. (*Christch.*)
Banbury, Sir Frederick George
Bill, Charles
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Bull, William James
Butcher, John George
Campbell, J. H. M. (*Dublin Univ*
Carson, Rt. Hn. Sir Edward H.
Cavendish, R. F. (*N. Lancs.*)
Cavendish, V. C. W. (*Derbyshire*
Cecil, Evelyn (*Aston Manor*)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J. (*Birm.*
Chamberlain, RtHnJ. A (*Worc.*
Charrington, Spencer
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Chas. Ready
Compton, Lord Alywne
Corbett, A. Cameron (*Glasgow*)
Corbett, T. L. (*Down, North*)
Craig, Charles Curtis (*Antrim, S*
Crossley, Sir Savile
Dickson, Charles Scott
Doughty, George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Faber, Edmund B. (*Hants, W.*)
Faber, George Denison (*York*)
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J (*Manc'r*
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Fisher, William Hayes
Forster, Henry William
Foster, P. S. (*Warwick, S.W.*
Fyler, John Arthur
Galloway, William Johnson
Gibbs, Hn A. G. H (*City of Lond*
Godson, Sir Augustus Fredk.
Gordon, J. (*Londonderry, South*
Gordon, Maj Evans (*Tr. Hmlts*
Gore, Hn G. R. C. Ormsby- (*Salop*
Greene, W. Raymond (*Cambs*
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Groves, James Grimble
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Hall, Edward Marshall
Hamilton, Rt Hn Lord G (*Midd'.*
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Hatch, Ernest Frederick Geo.
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, James (*Staffords., N.W.*
Heaton, John Henniker
Hermon-Hodge, Sir Robert T.
Hoare, Sir Samuel
Jameson, Major J. Eustace
Kemp, Lieut.-Colonel George
Keswick, William
Lambton, Hon. Fredk. Wm.
Law, Andrew Bonar (*Glasgow*)
Lawrence, Sir Jos. (*Monm'th*)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (*Liverpool*)
Lawson, John Grant (*Yorks. NR*
Lees, Sir Elliott (*Birkenhead*)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N. S.
Llewellyn, Evan Henry
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Rt Hn. Walter (*Bristol, S.*
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Francis William
Lowther, C. (*Cumb. Eskdale*)
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas, Reg'ld J. (*Portsmouth*)
Macdona, John Cumming
M'Arthur, Charles (*Liverpool*)
M'Iver Sir Lewis (*Edinburgh, W*
Milvain, Thomas
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
Montagu, G. (*Huntingdon*)
Morgan, David J. (*Walth'mstow*
Mount, William Arthur
Murray, Rt Hn A. Graham (*Bute*
Murray, Charles J. (*Coventry*)
Nicholson, William Graham
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Palmer, Walter (*Salisbury*)
Percy, Earl
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Plummer, Walter R.
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Rankin, Sir James
Reid, James (*Greenock*)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Renwick, George
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. C. Thomson
Roberts, Samuel (*Sheffield*)
Robertson, Herbert (*Hackney*)
Rolleston, Sir John F. L.
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sandys, Lt.-Col. Thos. Myles
Seely, Maj. J. E. B (*Isle of Wight*
Skewes-Cox, Thomas

Smith, Jas. Parker (*Lanarks.*)
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (*Strand*)
Spear, John Ward
Spencer, Sir E. (*W. Bromwich*)
Stanley, Edw. Jas. (*Somerset*)
Stanley, Lord (*Lancs.*)
Stroyan, John
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
Talbot, Lord E. (*Chichester*)
Taylor, Austin (*East Toxteth*)
Thornton, Percy M.
Valentia, Viscount
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt. Hn Sir William H
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Webb, Colonel William George
Williams, Rt Hn J Powell (*Birm*
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (*Bath*
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Asher, Alexander
Bayley, Thomas (*Derbyshire*)
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Broadhurst, Henry
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Caldwell, James
Causton, Richard Knight
Cremer, William Randal
Dalkeith, Earl of
Devlin, Joseph (*Kilkenny, N.*
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Doogan, P. C.
Elibank, Master of
Emmott, Alfred
Fenwick, Charles
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert John
Griffith, Ellis J.
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-
Hayter, Rt. Hon. Sir Arthur D.
Horniman, Frederick John
Hutton, Alfred E. (*Morley*)
Jones, Wm. (*Carnarvonshire*)
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kilbride, Denis
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (*Cornwall*)
Lewis, John Herbert
Lough, Thomas
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Arthur, William (*Cornwall*)
M'Kenna, Reginald
Markham, Arthur Basil
Moss, Samuel
Nussey, Thomas Willans
Partington, Oswald
Paulton, James Mellor
Pearson, Sir Weetman D.
Price, Robert John
Priestley, Arthur
Rea, Russell
Rickett, J. Compton
Rigg, Richard
Roberts, John H. (*Denbighsh.*)
Robson, William Snowdon
Roe, Sir Thomas
Rose, Charles Day
Runciman, Walter
Samuel, Herbert L. (*Cleveland*
Shackleton, David James
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Spencer, Rt Hn C. R. (*Northants*
Taylor, Theodore C. (*Radcliffe*)
Thomas, F. Freeman (*Hastings*)
Tomkinson, James
Toulmin, George
Ure, Alexander
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
White, Luke (*York, E. R.*)
Whiteley, G. (*York, W. R.*)
Whitley, J. H. (*Halifax*)

TELLERS FOR THE NOES.—Mr. Levy and Mr. Mansfield.

Clause 3.

THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: The Amendments standing in the name of the hon. Member for Loughborough on page 37 are out of order.

MR. ROBSON asked what there was in the Convention to alter this. It was a very serious matter if it was held that the discussion of this important question could not take place.

THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: The House might not be sitting at the time.

MR. ROBSON said he could not see how that affected the fact of the Amendments being out of order. It might be an objection, but surely it could not make the Amendments of his hon. friend out of order.

MR. LOUGH said he was afraid that the ruling which had just been given might prevent him moving the new clause he had put down.

THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: The hon. Member cannot discuss his new clause now.

MR. ROBSON said he thought that when this Bill was laid before the House it was laid before them for the purpose of being discussed in order that the House might modify or alter the measure if it thought fit. It seemed now that all further discussion was out of order, and modification was also not in order. They were bound to accept the rulings of the Chair, but he thought they were entitled to protest against the way the House of Commons and the country had been treated in this matter. What was the meaning of putting a Bill before the House?

THE DEPUTY-CHAIRMAN: That question is certainly out of order upon the Question that Clause 3 stand part of the Bill.

MR. ROBSON said he was confining his observations to Clause 3. What avail was it to them to propose Amendments to Clause 3 when the Government had made up their mind that no Amendment would be accepted. The whole discussion was ridiculous from beginning to end, and it was nothing less than a discredit to the House of Commons, and it was not respectful either to the House of Commons or the country. It was not only discreditable but it was insulting the House of Commons that they should be called upon to discuss this Bill for the ostensible purpose of amending it when, as a matter of fact, it was a mere farce and pretence, because the Government had made up their mind to avoid subsequent proceedings and to admit no Amendments whatever. Such a proceeding was not respectful or fair to the House of Commons, or the country, or the mercantile classes whose interests were so seriously involved. If any kind of measure required full discussion it was a trade Bill, and that was just the kind of Bill which the Government had determined should not have the ordinary stages of discussion in the House of Commons. He thought the House ought to register its protest against such conduct in the Division Lobby.

MR. LOUGH said there was the strongest reason why they should take a division upon this clause, because it contained precisely the same policy which his hon. friend had denounced. It stated that this Act might be altered, revoked, or added to by an Order in Council. Why should machinery be set up to do that? They might abolish by one of those Orders all that Parliament had done. That was another of the indignities thrown upon the House of Commons by this Bill. The Government had shown the utmost contempt for the House of Commons. By an Order in Council, which the country and the House did not understand, the Government took the right to set aside this law or make additions to it, and to do exactly what they pleased. If a Government should happen to be returned more anxious to preserve the interests of the country than the present Government, this clause would give them an opportunity of revoking this measure.

MR. BROADHURST (Leicester) asked why glucose was exempted. Was it because the brewers were interested in it?

*MR. RITCHIE said that glucose did not fall under the term of sugar.

Question put, "That the clause stand part of the Bill."

The Committee divided :—Ayes, 135; Noes 50. (See Division List No. 223.)

AYES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Atkinson, Right Hon. John
Bailey, James (*Walworth*)
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (*Man'r*
Balfour, Rt. Hn. G. W. (*Leeds*
Balfour, Kenneth R. (*Christch*
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Bull, William James
Campbell, J. H. M (*Dublin Univ.*
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, R. F. (*N. Lancs.*)
Cavendish, V. C. W. (*Derbysh.*
Cecil, Evelyn (*Aston Manor*)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hon-J. (*Birm.*
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J A (*Worc*
Charrington, Spencer
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Colomb, Sir John Charles Ready
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Corbett, A. Cameron (*Glasg.*)
Corbett, T. L. (*Down, North*)
Craig, Charles Curtis (*Antrim, S*
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dickson, Charles Scott
Doughty, George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A Akers
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Faber, Edmund B. (*Hants, W.*)
Faber, George Denison (*York*)
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edw.
Fergusson, Rt Hn. Sir J. (*Man'r*
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Fisher, William Hayes
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Philip S. (*Warwick, S. W*
Fyler, John Arthur
Galloway, William Johnson
Gibbs, Hn A. G. H. (*City of Lond.*
Godson, Sir Augustus Frederick
Gordon, J. (*Londonderry, South*
Gordon, Maj. Evans (*T'r H'mlets*
Greene, W. Raymond (*Cambs.*
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Groves, James Grimble
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Hall, Edward Marshall
Hamilton, Rt Hn Lord G. (*Mid'x*
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath James (*Staffords, N. W*
Jameson, Major J. Eustace
Kemp, Lieut-Colonel George
Keswick, William
Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm.
Law, Andrew Bonar (*Glasgow*
Lawrence, Sir Jos. (*Monm'th*)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (*Liverpool*
Lawson, John Grant (*Yorks, N. R*
Lees, Sir Elliott (*Birkenhead*)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N. S.
Llewellyn, Evan Henry
Lockwood, Lieut.-Colonel A. R.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (*Bristol, S.*
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Francis William
Lowther, C. (*Cumb. Eskdale*)
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas, Reginald J. (*Portsmouth*)
Macdona, John Cumming

M'Arthur, Charles (*Liverpool*)
M'Iver, Sir Lewis (*Edinb'rgh, W*
Milvain, Thomas
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
Montagu, G. (*Huntingdon*)
Morgan, D. J. (*Walthamstow*)
Mount, William Arthur
Murray, Rt Hn. A Graham (*Bute*
Murray, Charles J. (*Coventry*)
Nicholson, William Graham
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Palmer, Walter (*Salisbury*)
Percy Earl
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Rankin, Sir James
Reid, James (*Greenock*)
Remnant, Jas. Farquharson
Renwick, George
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. Chas. Thomson
Roberts, Samuel (*Sheffield*)
Robertson, H. (*Hackney*)
Rolleston, Sir John F. L.
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sandys, Lt.-Col. Thos. Myles
Seely, Maj. J. E. B. (*Isle of Wight*
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, James Parker (*Lanarks.*)
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (*Strand*)
Spear, John Ward
Spencer, Sir E. (*W. Bromwich*
Stanley, Edw. Jas. (*Somerset*)
Stanley, Lord (*Lancs.*)
Stroyan, John
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
Talbot, Lord E. (*Chichester*)
Taylor, Austin (*East Toxteth*)
Thornton, Percy M.
Valentia, Viscount
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt. Hon. Sir W. H.
Warde, Colonel C. E
Webb, Col. William George
Williams, Rt Hn J Powell- (*Birm*
* Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (*Bath*)
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.

Tellers for the Ayes—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Bayley, Thomas (*Derbyshire*)
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Broadhurst, Henry
Bryce, Right Hon. James
Caldwell, James
Causton, Richard Knight
Cremer, William Randal
Devlin, Joseph (*Kilkenny, N.*
Dilke, Rt. Hn. Sir Charles
Doogan, P. C.
Elibank, Master of
Fenwick, Charles
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert J.
Griffith, Ellis J.
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-
Hayter, Rt. Hon. Sir Arthur D.
Horniman, Frederick John
Hutton, Alfred E. (*Morley*)
Jones, William (*Carnarvonsh.*)
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kilbride, Denis
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (*Cornwall*)
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Arthur, William (*Cornwall*)
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Markham, Arthur Basil
Moss, Samuel
Nussey, Thomas Willans
Partington, Oswald
Paulton, James Mellor
Pearson, Sir Weetman D.
Price, Robert John
Priestley, Arthur
Rea, Russell
Rickett, J. Compton
Rigg, Richard
Roberts, John H. (*Denbighs.*)
Roe, Sir Thomas
Runciman, Walter
Samuel, Herbt. L. (*Cleveland*)
Shackleton, David James
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Taylor, Theo. C. (*Radcliffe*)
Toulmin, George
Ure, Alexander
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
White, Luke (*York, E.R.*)
Whitley, J. H. (*Halifax*)

Tellers for the Noes—Mr. Lough and Mr. Robson.

Clause 4.

Mr. RUNCIMAN said he would like to move to insert the word "dear" before "sugar," in line 11, Clause 4. His object was to draw attention to the true character of the Bill, and the transactions which had led up to it.

*The CHAIRMAN: I cannot really accept that Amendment. The Act is one to bring in force the Sugar Convention, and not the "Dear Sugar" Convention. The Amendment is only tendered in mockery.

Mr. WINSTON CHURCHILL (Oldham): May I remind you, Sir, that in connection with the Home Rule Bill introduced into this House the preamble set forth that it was a Bill for the better Government of Ireland, and an Amendment was moved which resulted in a long discussion to leave out the word "better," on the ground that it was an attempt to foist sham loyalty into a Bill. He should be happy to support the Amendment of the hon. Member for Dewsbury if it were in order.

*The CHAIRMAN: I cannot accept the Amendment.

Mr. WINSTON CHURCHILL: It is suggested only in the interests of accuracy. The object of the Bill is in fact to increase the price of sugar, and therefore the measure would be much more accurately described as the Dear Sugar Convention Bill.

*The CHAIRMAN. That is a matter for the Commission

Mr. RUNCIMAN said his object was to draw attention to the fact that this Bill referred not to any previous or succeeding Convention, but to the Dear Sugar Convention which they had been discussing during the last few weeks. On that ground he submitted that his Amendment was in order.

*The CHAIRMAN thought the Amendment was moved in a spirit of mockery.

Mr. BROADHURST asked whether he was in order in moving to substitute "prohibition" for "convention."

*The CHAIRMAN said there was nothing about sugar being prohibited. The short title was, "An Act to make provision for giving effect to the Convention signed on March 5th, 1902."

Mr. BROADHURST then asked whether he might move to substitute "sugar supply limitation," for "Sugar Convention."

Mr. BRYCE asked whether, according to Parliamentary usage it was not within the power of the House itself to determine the title to be given to an Act. If it was thought that a particular description was more apt or suitable to the character of the measure, might not the House express its own opinion?

*The CHAIRMAN: I will not contradict the right hon. Gentleman.

Mr. BRYCE submitted that in that case the Amendment of his hon. friend was in order.

*The CHAIRMAN: The words proposed are——?

Mr. BROADHURST: To substitute "supply limitation" for "Convention."

Amendment proposed—

> "In page 3, line 11, to leave out the word 'Convention,' and insert the words 'supply limitation.'"—(*Mr. Broadhurst.*)

Question proposed, "That the word 'Convention' stand part of the clause."

Mr. RUNCIMAN submitted that the description of his Amendment as having been moved in a spirit of mockery ought not to have been applied. Not even a Chairman of Committees was entitled inaccurately to impute motives. He asked whether his Amendment was ruled out of order as being contrary to Parliamentary practice.

*The CHAIRMAN: Yes, for the reason I have given—that this Act is to bring into force *the* Sugar Convention. There is nothing about dear sugar in that Convention.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 133; Noes, 51. (Division List No. 224.)

AYES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bailey, James (*Walworth*)
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (*Manch'r*)
Balfour, Rt Hn Gerald W. (*Leeds*
Balfour, Kenneth R. (*Christch.*
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Bull, William James
Campbell, J. H. M. (*Dublin Univ*
Carson, Rt. Hon. Sir Edw. H.
Cavendish, R. F. (*N. Lancs.*)
Cavendish, V C W (*Derbysh.*)
Cecil, Evelyn (*Aston Manor*)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hon. J. (*Birm*
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J A (*Worc*
Charrington, Spencer
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Corbett, A. Cameron (*Glasg.*)
Corbett, T. L. (*Down, North*)
Craig, Charles Curtis (*Antrim, S*
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dickson, Charles Scott
Doughty, George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Faber, Edmund B. (*Hants, W.*)
Faber, George Denison (*York*)
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Ed.
Fergusson, Rt. Hn. Sir J. (*Man'r*
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Fisher, William Hayes
Forster, Henry William
Foster, P. S. (*Warwick, S.W.*
Fyler, John Arthur
Galloway, William Johnson
Gibbs, Hn. A. G. H. (*City of Lond*
Godson, Sir Augustus Fredk.
Gordon, J. (*Londonderry, S.*)
Gordon, Maj Evans (*Tr. Hmlts*
Green, W. Raymond (*Cambs*
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Groves, James Grimble
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Hall, Edward Marshall
Hamilton, Rt Hn Ld. G. (*Mid'x*
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, James (*Staffs., N. W.*)
Kemp, Lieut.-Colonel George
Keswick, William
Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm.
Law, Andrew Bonar (*Glasgow*)
Lawrence, Sir Jos. (*Monm'th*)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (*Liverpool*)
Lawson, John Grant (*Yorks N R*
Lees, Sir Elliott (*Birkenhead*)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Fredk. N. S.
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Rt. Hn. W. (*Bristol, S.*
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Francis William
Lowther, C. (*Cumb. Eskdale*)
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas, Reginald J. (*Portsmouth*
Macdona, John Cumming
M'Arthur, Charles (*Liverpool*)
M'Iver, Sir Lewis (*Edinburgh W*
Milvain, Thomas

Molesworth, Sir Lewis
Montagu, G. (*Huntingdon*)
Morgan, David J (*Walthamstow*
Mount, William Arthur
Murray, RtHnA. Graham (*Bute*
Murray, Charles J. (*Coventry*)
Nicholson, William Graham
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Palmer, Walter (*Salisbury*)
Percy, Earl
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Rankin, Sir James
Reid, James (*Greenock*)
Remnant, Jas. Farquharson
Renwick, George
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. C. Thomson
Roberts, Samuel (*Sheffield*)
Robertson, H. (*Hackney*)
Rolleston, Sir John F. L.
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford-
Sandys, Lieut.-Col. Thos. Myles
Seely, Maj. J. E. B. (*Isle of Wight*
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, Jas. Parker (*Lanarks.*)
Smith, Hn. W. F. D. (*Strand*)
Spear, John Ward
Spencer, Sir E. (*W. Bromwich*)
Stanley, Edward Jas. (*Somerset*)
Stanley, Lord (*Lancs.*)
Stroyan, John
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
Talbot, Lord E. (*Chichester*)
Taylor, Austin (*East Toxteth*)
Thornton, Percy M.
Valentia, Viscount
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt. Hn. Sir William H.
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Webb, Col. William George
Williams, RtHnJ Powell- (*Birm*
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (*Bath*
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Bayley, Thomas (*Derbyshire*)
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Caldwell, James
Causton, Richard Knight
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Cremer, William Randal
Devlin, Joseph (*Kilkenny, N.*)
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Doogan, P. C.
Elibank, Master of
Emmott, Alfred
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert J.
Griffith, Ellis J.
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Chas. Seale-
Hayter, Rt Hon Sir Arthur D.
Horniman, Frederick John
Hutton, Alfred E. (*Morley*)
Jones, Wm. (*Carnarvonshire*)
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kilbride, Denis
Lawson Sir Wilfrid (*Cornwall*)
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lough, Thomas
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Arthur, William (*Cornwall*)
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Markham, Arthur Basil
Moss, Samuel
Nussey, Thomas Willans
Partington, Oswald
Pearson, Sir Weetman D.
Price, Robert John
Priestley, Arthur
Rea, Russell
Rickett, J. Compton
Rigg, Richard
Roberts, John H. (*Denbighs.*)
Robson, William Snowdon
Roe, Sir Thomas
Runciman, Walter
Samuel, Herbt. L. (*Cleveland*)
Shackleton, David James
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Taylor, Theo. C. (*Radcliffe*)
Toulmin, George
Ure, Alexander
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
White, Luke (*York, E.R.*)
Whitley, J. H. (*Halifax*)

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Broadhurst and Mr. Fenwick.

MR. MANSFIELD asked if it would be in order to move to add the words "the Sugar Convention price raising Bill."

*THE CHAIRMAN: Is that a true description of the Bill?

Motion made, and Question put, "That the clause stand part of the Bill."

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 133; Noes, 50. (Division List No. 225.)

AYES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Atkinson, Right Hon. John
Bailey, James (*Walworth*)
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (*Manch'r*
Balfour, RtHnGerald W. (*Leeds*
Balfour, Kenneth R. (*Christch.*
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith-
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Bull, William James
Campbell, J. H. M (*Dublin Univ*
Cavendish, V. C. W. (*Derbyshire*
Cavendish, R. F. (*N. Lancs.*)
Cecil, Evelyn (*Aston Manor.*
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J. (*Birm*)
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J A (*Worc*
Charrington, Spencer
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. T. H. A. E.
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Corbett, A. Cameron (*Glasgow*
Corbett, T. L. (*Down, North*)
Craig, Charles Curtis (*Antrim, S.*
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dickson, Charles Scott
Doughty, George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Faber, Edmund B. (*Hants, W.*)
Faber, George Denison (*York*)
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson, RtHnSir J. (*Manc'r*
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Fisher, William Hayes
Forster, Henry William
Foster, P. S. (*Warwick, S.W.*
Fyler, John Arthur
Galloway, William Johnson
Gibbs, Hn. A. G. H (*City of Lond.*
Godson, Sir Augustus Frederick
Gordon, J. (*Londonderry, S.*)
Gordon, Maj Evans (*T'r H'mlets*
Greene, W. Raymond (*Cambs.*
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Groves, James Grimble
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Hall, Edward Marshall
Hamilton, RtHnLordG (*Midd'x*
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, Frederick Leverton

Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, James (*Staffords, N. W.*
Jeffreys, Rt. Hon. Arthur Fred.
Keswick, William
Lambton, Hon. Frederick Wm.
Law, Andrew Bonar (*Glasgow*)
Lawrence, Sir Joseph (*Monm'th*
Lawrence, Wm. F. (*Liverpool*)
Lawson, John Grant (*Yorks, N R*
Lees, Sir Elliott (*Birkenhead*)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N. S.
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (*Bristol, S*
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Francis William
Lowther, C. (*Cumb. Eskdale*)
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas, Reginald J. (*Portsmouth*)
Macdona, John Cumming
M'Arthur, Charles (*Liverpool*)
M'Iver, Sir Lewis (*Edinburgh W*
Milvain, Thomas
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
Montagu, G. (*Huntingdon*)
Morgan, D. J. (*Walthamstow*)
Mount, William Arthur
Murray, Rt Hn A. Graham (*Bute*
Murray, Chas. J. (*Coventry*)
Nicholson, William Graham
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Palmer, Walter (*Salisbury*)
Percy, Earl
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Rankin, Sir James
Reid, James (*Greenock*)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Renwick, George
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. Chas. Thomson
Roberts, Samuel (*Sheffield*)
Robertson, H. (*Hackney*)
Rolleston, Sir John F. L.
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford-
Sandys, Lieut-Col. Thos. Myles
Seely, Maj J. E. B. (*Isle of Wight*
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, James Parker (*Lanarks*
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (*Strand*)
Spear, John Ward
Spencer, Sir E. (*W. Bromwich*
Stanley, Edward Jas. (*Somerset*
Stanley, Lord (*Lancs.*)
Stroyan, John
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
Talbot, Lord E. (*Chichester*)
Taylor, Austin (*East Toxteth*
Thornton, Percy M.
Valentia, Viscount
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt. Hn. Sir William H.
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Webb, Colonel William George
Williams, Rt Hn J Powell (*Birm*
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (*Bath*
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Anstruther.

NOES

Bayley, Thomas (*Derbyshire*)
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Caldwell, James
Causton, Richard Knight
Cremer, William Randal
Devlin, Joseph (*Kilkenny, N.*)
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Doogan, P. C.
Elibank, Master of
Emmott, Alfred
Fenwick, Charles
Gladstone, Rt Hn Herbert John
Griffith, Ellis J.
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-
Hayter, Rt Hon Sir Arthur D.
Horniman, Frederick John
Hutton, Alfred E. (*Morley*)
Jones, Wm. (*Carnarvonshire*)
Kearley, Hudson, E.
Kilbride, Denis
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (*Cornwall*
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lough, Thomas
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Arthur, William (*Cornwall*
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Markham, Arthur Basil
Moss, Samuel
Nussey, Thomas Willans
Partington, Oswald
Pearson, Sir Weetman D.
Price, Robert John
Priestly, Arthur
Rea, Russell
Rickett, J. Compton
Rigg, Richard
Roberts, John H. (*Denbighs.*)
Robson, William Snowdon
Roe, Sir Thomas
Runciman, Walter
Samuel, Herbt. L. (*Cleveland*)
Shackleton, David James
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Taylor, Theodore C. (*Radcliffe*
Toulmin, George
Warner, Thos. Courtenay T.
White, Luke (*York, E.R.*)
Whitley, J. H. (*Halifax*)

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Broadhurst and Mr. Ure.

Preamble.

Motion made, and Question proposed, "That this be the preamble of the Bill."

MR. SHACKLETON (Lancashire, Clitheroe) moved to leave out "the King's Most Excellent Majesty," and insert the words "divers foreign Powers."

*THE CHAIRMAN said that was out of order because it was contrary to fact.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 134; Noes, 50. (Division List No. 226.)

AYES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bailey, James (*Walworth*)
Balfour, Rt. Hon. A. J. (*Manch'r*
Balfour, Rt Hn Gerald W. (*Leeds*
Balfour, Kenneth R. (*Christch*
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Bull, William James
Campbell, J. H. M. (*Dublin Univ*
Cavendish, R. F. (*N. Lancs.*)
Cavendish, V. C. W. (*Derbyshire*
Cecil, Evelyn (*Aston Manor*)
Chamberlain, Rt Hon J (*Birm*
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J A (*Worc*
Charrington, Spencer
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Corbett, A. Cameron (*Glasgow*)
Corbett, T. L. (*Down, North*)
Craig, Charles Curtis (*Antrim S.*
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Dalkeith, Earl of

Dickson, Charles Scott
Doughty, George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Faber, Edmund B. (*Hants, W.*)
Faber, George Denison (*York*)
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Ed.
Fergusson, Rt Hn. Sir J. (*Man'r*
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Fisher, William Hayes
Forster, Henry William
Foster, P. S. (*Warwick, S. W.*
Fyler, John Arthur
Galloway, William Johnson
Gibbs, HnA.G.H(*City of Lond*
Godson, Sir Augustus Fredk.
Gordon, J. (*Londonderry, S.*)
Gordon, Maj Evans (*Tr. Hmlts*
Greene, W. Raymond (*Cambs.*)
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Groves, James Grimble
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Hall, Edward Marshall
Hamilton, Rt Hn Ld.G.(*Midx*
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Heath, James (*Staffords, N. W.*
Jeffreys, Rt. Hn. Arthur Fred
Kemp, Lieut.-Colonel George
Keswick, William
Lambton, Hon. Fredk. Wm.
Law, Andrew Bonar (*Glasgow*
Lawrence, Sir Jos. (*Monm'th*)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (*Liverpool*
Lawson, JohnGrant(*Yorks, NR*
Lees, Sir Elliott (*Birkenhead*)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N.S
Lockwood, Lieut -Col. A. R.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, RtHonWalter(*Bristol, S*)
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Francis William
Lowther, C. (*Cumb. Eskdale*)
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas, Reginald J. (*Portsmouth*
Macdona, John Cumming
M'Arthur, Charles (*Liverpool*)
M'IverSirLewis(*Edinburgh W.*
Milvain, Thomas
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
Montagu, G. (*Huntingdon*)
Morgan, D. J. (*Walthamstow*)
Mount, William Arthur
Murray, RtHnA.Graham(*Bute*
Murray, Charles J. (*Coventry*)
Nicholson, William Graham
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Palmer, Walter (*Salisbury*)
Percy, Earl
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Rankin, Sir James
Reid, James (*Greenock*)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Renwick, George
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. C. Thomson
Roberts, Samuel (*Sheffield*)
Robertson, H. (*Hackney*)
Rolleston, Sir John F. L.
Ropner, Colonel Sir Robert
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sandys, Lieut.-Col. Thos. Myles
Seely, Maj. J. E. B. (*Isle of Wight*
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, JamesParker(*Lanarks.*)
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (*Strand*)
Spear, John Ward
Spencer, Sir E. (*W. Bromwich*)
Stanley, Edward Jas. (*Somerset*
Stanley, Lord (*Lancs.*)
Stroyan, John
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
Talbot, Lord E. (*Chichester*)
Taylor, Austin (*East Toxteth*)
Thornton, Percy M.
Valentia, Viscount
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, RtHn. SirWilliamH.
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Webb, Col. William George
Williams, RtHnJPowell-(*Birm*
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (*Bath*
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George
Wyndham-Quin, Major W. H.

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Bayley, Thomas (*Derbyshire*)
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Bryce, Rt. Hon. James
Caldwell, James
Causton Richard Knight
Cremer, William Randal
Devlin. Joseph (*Kilkenny, N.*)
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Doogan, P. C.
Elibank, Master of
Emmott, Alfred
Fenwick, Charles
Gladstone, Rt. Hn. Herbert J.
Griffith, Ellis J.
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-
Hayter, Rt. Hn. Sir Arthur D.
Horniman, Frederick John
Hutton, Alfred E. (*Morley*)
Jones, William (*Carnarvonsh.*)
Kearley, Hudson, E.
Kilbride, Denis
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (*Cornwall*)
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
Lough, Thomas
MacVeagh, Jeremiah
M'Arthur, William (*Cornwall*
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Markham, Arthur Basil
Moss, Samuel
Nussey, Thomas Willans
Partington, Oswald
Pearson, Sir Weetman D.
Price. Robert John
Priestley, Arthur
Rea, Russell
Rickett, J. Compton
Rigg, Richard
Roberts, John H. (*Denbighsh.*
Robson, William Snowdon
Roe, Sir Thomas
Runciman, Walter
Samuel, Herbt. L. (*Cleveland*)
Shackleton, David James
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Taylor, Theodore C. (*Radcliffe*)
Toulmin, George
Warner, Thomas Courtenay T.
White, Luke (*York, E.R.*)
Whitley, J. H. (*Halifax*)

TELLERS FOR THE NOES — Mr. Ure and Mr. Broadhurst.

Motion made, and Question put, "That the Chairman do report the Bill, without Amendment, to the House.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 124; Noes, 41. (Division List No. 227.)

AYES.

Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bailey, James (*Walworth*)
Balfour, Rt. Hn. A. J. (*Man'r*
Balfour, RtHnGeraldW. (*Leeds*
Balfour, Kenneth R. (*Christch.*
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Boscawen, Arthur Griffith
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Bull, William James
Cavendish, R. F. (*N. Lancs.*)
Cavendish, V. C. W (*Derbyshire*
Cecil, Evelyn (*Aston Manor*)
Chamberlain, Rt Hon J (*Birm*
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn. J A (*Worc*
Charrington, Spencer
Clive, Captain Percy A.
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Compton, Lord Alwyne
Corbett, A. Cameron (*Glasg.*)
Corbett, T. L. (*Down, North*)
Craig, CharlesCurtis(*Antrim, S*
Crossley, Rt. Hon. Sir Savile
Dalkeith, Earl of

Dickson, Charles Scott
Doughty, George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Faber, Edmund B. (*Hants, W.*
Faber, George Denison (*York*)
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Fergusson, Rt Hn. Sir J. (*Manc'r*
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Fisher, William Hayes
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Philip. S (*Warwick, S. W*
Fyler, John Arthur
Gibbs, Hn. A. G. H. (*City of Lond*
Godson, Sir Augustus Frederick
Gordon, J. (*Londonderry, S.*)
Gordon, Maj Evans (*T'r Haml'ts*
Greene, W. Raymond (*Cambs.*)
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Groves, James Grimble
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Hall, Edward Marshall
Hamilton, Rt Hn Lord G (*Midd'x*
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Harris, Frederick Leverton
Hay, Hon. Claude George
Jeffreys, Rt. Hn. Arthur Fred
Kemp, Lieut.-Colonel George
Keswick, William
Lambton, Hon. Fredk. Wm.
Law, Andrew Bonar (*Glasgow*)
Lawrence, Sir Jos. (*Monm'th*)
Lawrence, Wm. F. (*Liverpool*
Lawson, John Grant (*Yorks. NR*
Lees, Sir Elliott (*Birkenhead*)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N. S.
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Rt. Hn. Walter (*Bristol, S.*
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Francis William
Lowther, C. (*Cumb. Eskdale*)
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas, Reginald J. (*Portsmouth*
Macdona, John Cumming
M'Arthur, Charles (*Liverpool*)
M'Iver, Sir Lewis (*Edinburgh W*
Milvain, Thomas
Molesworth, Sir Lewis
Montagu, G. (*Huntingdon*)
Morgan, D. J. (*Walthamstow*)
Mount, William Arthur
Murray, Charles J. (*Coventry*)
Nicholson, William Graham
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Palmer, Walter (*Salisbury*)
Percy, Earl
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Rankin, Sir James
Reid, James (*Greenock*)
Remnant, Jas. Farquharson
Renwick, George
Ritchie, Rt. Hn. C. Thomson
Roberts, Samuel (*Sheffield*)
Robertson, Herbert (*Hackney*)
Rolleston, Sir John F. L.
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford-
Sandys, Lieut.-Col. Thos. Myles
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, Jas. Parker (*Lanarks.*)
Smith, Hn. W. F. D. (*Strand*)
Spear, John Ward
Spencer, Sir E. (*W. Bromwich*)
Stanley, Edward Jas. (*Somerset*
Stanley, Lord (*Lancs.*)
Stroyan, John
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
Talbot, Lord E. (*Chichester*)
Taylor, Austin (*East Toxteth*)
Thornton, Percy M.
Valentia, Viscount
Walker, Col. William Hall
Walrond, Rt Hon Sir William H.
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Webb, Colonel William George
Williams, Rt Hn J Powell- (*Birm*
Willox, Sir John Archibald
Wodehouse, Rt. Hn. E. R. (*Bath*)
Wrightson, Sir Thomas
Wylie, Alexander

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—Sir Alexander Acland-Hood and Mr. Anstruther.

NOES.

Bayley, Thomas (*Derbyshire*)
Bolton, Thomas Dolling
Broadhurst, Henry
Caldwell, James
Cremer, William Randal
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Doogan, P. C.
Elibank, Master of
Fenwick, Charles
Griffith, Ellis J.
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Chas. Seale-
Hayter, Rt Hon Sir Arthur D.
Hutton, Alfred E. (*Morley*)
Jones, William (*Carnarvonsh.*)
Kearley, Hudson E.
Kilbride, Denis
Lawson, Sir Wilfrid (*Cornwall*
Levy, Maurice
Lewis, John Herbert
M'Arthur, William (*Cornwall*)
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Markham, Arthur Basil
Moss, Samuel
Nussey, Thomas Willans
Partington, Oswald
Pearson, Sir Weetman D.
Price, Robert John
Priestley, Arthur
Rea, Russell
Rickett, J. Compton
Rigg, Richard
Roe, Sir Thomas
Runciman, Walter
Samuel, Herbert L. (*Cleveland*
Shackleton, David James
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Taylor, Theodore C. (*Radcliffe*
Toulmin, George
Ure, Alexander
White, Luke (*York, E.R.*)
Whitley, J. H. (*Halifax*)

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Lough and Mr. Warner.

Bill reported, without Amendment; to be read the third time to-morrow.

———

RAILWAYS (ELECTRICAL POWER) BILL.

(Considered in Committee.)

(In the Committee.)

[MR. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith) in the Chair.]

Clause 1.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 1, line 6, after the word 'may,' to insert the words 'upon the application of a railway company.'"—(*Mr. Loder.*)

Amendment agreed to.

MR. J. H. LEWIS (Flint Boroughs) said he wished to know if precautions would be inserted in these Orders to prevent railway companies from securing the control of existing electrical companies, by purchasing the majority of the shares and working them for their own benefit. They had seen many instances where railway companies had absorbed other undertakings to the disadvantage of the general public. He hoped the Board of Trade, in framing these Orders, would carefully bear that point in mind.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 1, to leave out lines 22 to 24, inclusive."—(*Mr. J. H. Lewis.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the clause."

THE PARLIAMENTARY SECRETARY TO THE BOARD OF TRADE (Mr. BONAR LAW, Glasgow, Blackfriars) said this matter had been brought to the notice of the Board of Trade, and they were doing their best to see that the interests of the public would be safeguarded.

MR. J. H. LEWIS said he was satisfied with the hon. Member's reply, and he would ask leave to withdraw his Amendment.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

Clause 1, as amended, agreed to

Clause 2.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 2, line 17, after the word 'Committee,' to insert the words 'or if the two Houses of Parliament think fit so to order to a Joint Committee of those Houses.'"—(*Mr. Caldwell.*)

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 2, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 3 withdrawn.

Clause 4.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 2, line 41, after the word 'made,' to insert the words 'by the Council of any County, any local authority, or other person.'"—(*Mr. Gerald Balfour.*)

Amendment agreed to.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 3, line 2, at end of line, to insert the words 'and if after consideration the Board decide that the objection should be upheld, the Board shall not make the Order or shall modify the Order so as to remove the objection.'"—(*Mr. Gerald Balfour.*)

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 4, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 5.

MR. MARKHAM (Nottinghamshire, Mansfield) said he had several times referred to the rules of the Board of Trade, but the Department did not appear to be willing to grant to railway companies powers for establishing high voltage current.

MR. BONAR LAW said the Board of Trade certainly did not desire to put any obstacles in the way, and they were doing all they could in the direction indicated by the hon. Member consistent with the convenience of the public.

Clause 5 agreed to.

Clause 6.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 3, line 25, to leave out the word 'Commission,' and insert the words 'and Canal Commissioners.'"—(*Mr. Gerald Balfour.*)

Amendment agreed to.

Clause 6, as amended, agreed to.

Clause 7 agreed to.

Bill reported; as amended, to be considered to-morrow.

PATRIOTIC FUND BILL.

(Considered in Committee.)

(In the Committee.)

[MR. J. W. LOWTHER (Cumberland, Penrith) in the Chair.]

Schedule 1.

MR. LOUGH (Islington, W.) thought this schedule ought to be explained to the House. There would be some 300 or 400 people included in this corporation, and he would like to know if the Government could quote any precedent for setting up such a body as this. He begged to move his Amendment.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 3, line 4, to leave out Sub-section 1."—(*Mr. Lough.*)

Question proposed, "That the words proposed to be left out stand part of the schedule."

THE CIVIL LORD OF THE ADMIRALTY (Mr. PRETYMAN, Suffolk, Woodbridge) said it was clear that the management of this fund must necessarily involve a numerous body, and the object of the Bill was to give power to all the local interests concerned to have their views represented on the central association, which would number altogether 215. The executive committee would be a business-like body of small dimensions. The suggestion that beneficiaries should be represented was practically impossible.

Amendment, by leave, withdrawn.

*SIR A. HAYTER (Walsall) moved to insert in the schedule "the lords lieutenant of counties." He said the object of the Bill was to form a central advisory council which should be in communication with the Committees for local funds in the counties. Hitherto most valuable assistance had been received from the lords lieutenant of counties, who were to a certain extent representatives of their respective counties, and at a meeting recently held at the United Service Institution they offered to continue that assistance. If the lords lieutenant were added to the body considerable sums, at present in their hands, which otherwise would remain locally in the counties, would be paid into the general fund.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 3, line 8, after the word 'members' to insert the words '(b) The lords lieutenant of counties.'"—(*Sir Arthur Hayter.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. KEARLEY (Devonport) said the reason this Bill had been introduced was that the Patriotic Commissioners had lost the confidence of the public, and the cause of that loss of confidence was the unrepresentative character of the Commission. This Amendment would introduce the very element which had made the existing body so unpopular. If the new body was to succeed it was necessary that it should gain public approval at the outset, and that would be rendered impossible by the acceptance of this Amendment. He might say that he was consulted before the measure was introduced; and in the scheme as originally drawn, the lords lieutenant were included, but after considerable discussion the Prime Minister and his advisers came round to his way of thinking, and the lords lieutenant were struck out. He hoped that that decision would not now be gone back upon.

MR. HAYES FISHER (Fulham) thought the country would not share the alarm of the hon. Member for Devonport with regard to the admission of the lords lieutenant. In the composition of this body he presumed the Government had mainly in mind the collection of funds. During the late war the country showed its confidence in the lords lieutenant by placing in their hands enormous sums of money for distribution, and he believed the collection of funds in the present instance would be greatly assisted by the lords lieutenant being added to the authority. The body was already so large and unwieldy that the addition of another hundred members would not matter. The best beggars in the world were parsons and Peers, and if they could not get the parsons they might as well have a few of the Peers.

*SIR CHARLES DILKE (Gloucestershire, Forest of Dean) said the argument of the hon. Member for Fulham was in favour of placing all the Peers and all the Bishops on this body. It was already exceedingly unwieldy, and he assumed that the decision to appoint the chairmen of the County Councils had been taken as an alternative to putting on the lords lieutenant. He understood on the introduction of the Bill that a decision had been come to against this change, and he hoped that decision would be adhered to.

LORD EDMUND TALBOT (Sussex, Chichester) hoped the Amendment would be accepted. It would be a great improvement to the Bill, and would greatly facilitate the collection of money at critical times.

MR. STOPFORD SACKVILLE (Northamptonshire, N.) said that if the choice were between chairmen of County Councils and the lords lieutenant of the counties, he should say that the latter were the better men for appointment on this body. The chairmen of County Councils were elected for a year, and might not have any interest in military matters, whereas he did not know a single lord lieutenant who was not greatly interested in charities and military affairs.

MR. PRETYMAN said it was perfectly true that this matter was considered by the hon. Member for Devonport and those who were preparing the Bill, and that, in order not to have too large a body, it was thought that the lords lieutenant should be excluded. That was the arrangement then made. Of course it was open to reconsideration, and the House would agree that there was a good deal to be said on both sides of the question. They did not want a too unwieldy body, but, on the other hand, the lords lieutenant were those who had mainly identified themselves with the collection of subscriptions. He would, however, leave the House to decide the question for itself.

MR. ELLIS GRIFFITH (Anglesey) thought they were entitled to have the views of the Government. Surely they had some predilections upon it.

*SIR A. HAYTER, speaking from practical experience, commended the good work done by lords lieutenant.

Question put.

The Committee divided:—Ayes, 103; Noes, 29. (Division List No. 228.)

AYES.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir A. F.
Agg-Gardner, James Tynte
Anson, Sir William Reynell
Anstruther, H. T.
Arnold-Forster, Hugh O.
Atkinson, Rt. Hon. John
Bailey, James (*Walworth*)
Blundell, Colonel Henry
Brodrick, Rt. Hon. St. John
Brotherton, Edward Allen
Bull, William James
Campbell, J. H. M (*Dublin Univ.*
Cavendish, R. F. (*N. Lancs.*)
Cavendish, V. C. W. (*Derbyshire*
Chamberlain, Rt. Hn J. A (*Worc.*
Churchill, Winston Spencer
Cochrane, Hon. Thos. H. A. E.
Collings, Rt. Hon. Jesse
Corbett, A. Cameron (*Glasg.*)
Corbett, T. L. (*Down, North*)
Craig, Charles Curtis (*Antrim, S.*
Crossley, Sir Savile
Dalkeith, Earl of
Dickson, Charles Scott
Doughty, George
Douglas, Rt. Hon. A. Akers
Durning-Lawrence, Sir Edwin
Elibank, Master of
Elliot, Hon. A. Ralph Douglas
Faber, Edmund B. (*Hants, W.*)
Fellowes, Hon. Ailwyn Edward
Finch, Rt. Hon. George H.
Forster, Henry William
Foster, Philip S (*Warwick, S. W.*
Fyler, John Arthur
Gibbs, Hn A. G. H. (*City of Lond.*
Godson, Sir Augustus Frederick
Gordon, J. (*Londonderry, S.*)
Greene, W. Raymond (*Cambs*
Greville, Hon. Ronald
Groves, James Grimble
Guest, Hon. Ivor Churchill
Hamilton, Rt Hn Ld. G. (*Midx*
Hare, Thomas Leigh
Hayne, Rt. Hon. Charles Seale-
Heath, James (*Staffords. N. W.*
Kemp, Lieut.-Colonel George
Law, Andrew Bonar (*Glasgow*
Lawrence, Sir Joseph (*Monm'th*)
Lawson, John Grant (*Yorks. N R*
Lees, Sir Elliott (*Birkenhead*)
Legge, Col. Hon. Heneage
Leveson-Gower, Frederick N. S.
Lockwood, Lieut.-Col. A. R.
Loder, Gerald Walter Erskine
Long, Rt. Hn. W. (*Bristol, S.*
Lonsdale, John Brownlee
Lowe, Francis William
Lowther, C. (*Cumb. Eskdale*)
Loyd, Archie Kirkman
Lucas, Reginald J. (*Portsmouth*)
Macdona, John Cumming
M'Iver, Sir Lewis (*Edinburgh W*
Milvain, Thomas
Montagu, G. (*Huntingdon*)
Morgan, David J. (*Walthamst'w*
Murray, Rt Hn A. Graham (*Bute*
Murray, Charles J. (*Coventry*)
Nicholson, William Graham
O'Neill, Hon. Robert Torrens
Partington, Oswald
Percy, Earl
Platt-Higgins, Frederick
Pretyman, Ernest George
Pryce-Jones, Lt.-Col. Edward
Purvis, Robert
Randles, John S.
Rankin, Sir James
Reid, James (*Greenock*)
Remnant, James Farquharson
Rigg, Richard
Roberts, Samuel (*Sheffield*)
Robertson, Herbert (*Hackney*)
Rolleston, Sir John F. L.
Sackville, Col. S. G. Stopford
Sandys, Lt.-Col. Thos. Myles
Seely, Maj. J. E. B. (*Isle of Wight*
Skewes-Cox, Thomas
Smith, James Parker (*Lanarks.*
Smith, Hon. W. F. D. (*Strand*)
Spencer, Sir E. (*W. Bromwich*)
Stanley, Edward Jas. (*Somerset*)
Stanley, Lord (*Lancs.*)
Strutt, Hon. Charles Hedley
Sturt, Hon. Humphry Napier
Talbot, Lord E. (*Chichester*)
Thornton, Percy M.
Walrond, Rt Hn. Sir William H.
Warde, Colonel C. E.
Webb, Colonel William George
Wrightson, Sir Thomson
Wylie, Alexander
Wyndham, Rt. Hon. George

TELLERS FOR THE AYES—
Sir Arthur Hayter and
Mr. Hayes Fisher.

Lord Edmund Talbot.

NOES.

Broadhurst, Henry
Caldwell, James
Dilke, Rt. Hon. Sir Charles
Fenwick, Charles
Hutton, Alfred E. (*Morley*)
Jones, Wm. (*Carnarvonshire*)
Levy, Maurice
Lough, Thomas
M'Arthur, William (*Cornwall*)
Mansfield, Horace Rendall
Markham, Arthur Basil
Moss, Samuel
Nussey, Thomas Willans
Pearson, Sir Weetman D.
Price, Robert John
Priestley, Arthur
Rea, Russell
Rickett, J. Compton
Samuel, Herbt. L. (*Cleveland*)
Shackleton, David James
Shipman, Dr. John G.
Spear, John Ward
Taylor, Austin (*East Toxteth*)
Taylor, Theo. C. (*Radcliffe*)
Toulmin, George
Valentia, Viscount
Warner, Thos. Courtenay T.
White, Luke (*York, E. R.*)
Whitley, J. H. (*Halifax*)

TELLERS FOR THE NOES—Mr. Kearley and Mr. Ellis Griffith.

MR. SHACKLETON (Lancashire, Clitheroe) moved to insert in the first schedule, line 15, after "county" the words "and municipal." He said the object was to enable the mayors of municipal boroughs to be appointed. He knew about the work in connection with the local funds, and it would be for the advantage of all concerned to have the corporations represented.

Amendment proposed—

"In page 4, line 15, after the word 'county' to insert the words 'and municipal.'"—(*Mr. Shackleton.*)

Question proposed, "That those words be there inserted."

MR. PRETYMAN said he had great sympathy with the Amendment, but he could not accept it. He did not think it was necessary to appoint the mayors of municipal boroughs. It had not been the practice in the past, and probably would not be in the future, to raise a fund in all municipal boroughs. It had been done in a few exceptional cases, but they could not legislate for exceptional cases. He thought the municipal boroughs were amply represented by the chairman of the County Council or other representatives of the county.

Question put, and negatived.

Bill reported; as amended, to be considered to-morrow.

PUBLIC WORKS LOANS [REMISSION OF DEBT.]

Resolution reported, "That it is expedient to authorise the remission of a certain debt due to the Public Works Loan Commissioners by the Port Seton Harbour Commissioners, in pursuance of any Act of the present session relating to Local Loans."

Resolution agreed to.

PUBLIC WORKS LOANS BILL

Considered in Committee, and reported, without Amendment; to be read the third time to-morrow.

ECCLESIASTICAL COMMISSIONERS BILL [LORDS].

Order for Second Reading read, and discharged; Bill withdrawn.

BISHOPRICS OF SOUTHWARK AND BIRMINGHAM BILL [LORDS].

Order for Second Reading read, and discharged. Bill withdrawn.

ISLE OF MAN (CUSTOMS) BILL.

Read a second time, and committed for to-morrow.

CHARITABLE LOAN SOCIETIES (IRELAND) BILL.

Order for Second Reading read, and discharged. Bill withdrawn.

IRELAND DEVELOPMENT GRANT BILL.

Read the third time, and passed.

CONGESTED DISTRICTS (SCOTLAND) (No. 2) BILL.

Order for Second Reading read, and discharged: Bill withdrawn.

MARRIAGE LEGALISATION BILL.

Considered in Committee, and reported; Bill, as amended, to be considered this day.

POST OFFICE (CONTRACT FOR ACCELERATED MAIL SERVICE TO AND FROM IRELAND VIA CARLISLE, STRANRAER, AND LARNE.)

Order read, for resuming adjourned debate on Question [3rd August], "That the contract, dated the 8th day of November, 1902, with the Glasgow and South Western Railway Company, the Portpatrick and Wigtownshire Joint Committee, and the Belfast and Northern Counties Railway Company, for an Accelerated Mail Service to and from Ireland via Carlisle, Stranraer, and Larne, printed in Parliamentary Paper, No. 56, of session 1903, be approved."—(*Mr. Elliot.*)

Question again proposed: Debate resumed.

Question put, and agreed to.

MOTOR-CARS (EXCISE DUTY.)

(Considered in Committee.)

(In the Committee.)

Resolved, That it is expedient to authorise the imposition of an Excise duty on persons employed as drivers on motor-cars of the same amount as is payable on male servants, in pursuance of any Act of the present session to amend The Locomotives on Highways Act, 1896.—(*Mr. Walter Long.*)

Resolution to be reported to-morrow.

Whereupon, in pursuance of the Order of the House of the 28th day of July, Mr. SPEAKER adjourned the House without Question put.

Adjourned at ten minutes after
Three o'clock, a.m.

APPENDIX I.

PUBLIC BILLS

DEALT WITH IN VOLUME CXXVI.

Those marked thus * are Government Bills. The figures in parentheses in the last column refer to the page in this volume. "[H.L.]" following title indicates that the Bill originated in the Lords.

(A.) HOUSE OF LORDS.

Title of Bill.	Brought in by	Progress.
Addenbrooke's Hospital		Read 2^{a} 14th August (1404)
Bills of Exchange Act (1882) Amendment		Read 1^{a} 18th July (439) Read 2^{a} 31st July (1065) Committee 3rd August (1269) Report 3rd August (1269) Read 3^{a} and passed 4th August (1427)
County Courts Jurisdiction Extension		Committee 23rd July (5)
*Employment of Children	*Lord Belper*	Read 1^{a} 3rd August (1154)
*Irish Land	*Duke of Devonshire*	Read 1^{a} 23rd July (49) Read 2^{a} 3rd August (1055)
*Licensing Acts (Scotland) Consolidation and Amendment	*Lord Balfour of Burleigh*	Read 1^{a} 23rd July (50) Read 2^{a} 30th July (832) Committee 4th August (1405) Report 5th August (1570)
*Light Railways	*Lord Wolverton*	Read 2^{a} 24th July (210) Committee 27th July (301) Report 28th July (439) Read 3^{a} and passed 30th July (846)
*London Education	*Duke of Devonshire*	Read 1^{a} 23rd July (50) Read 2^{a} 28th July (439) Committee 30th July (847) Report 4th August (1421) Read 3^{a} and passed 5th August (1570)
Marine Store Dealers (Ireland)	*Earl of Denbigh*	Report 23rd July (5)
*Metropolitan Streets	*Lord Belper*	Committee 28th July (525) Report 28th July (525) Read 3^{a} and passed 30th July (891)

(A.) HOUSE OF LORDS—*continued.*

Title of Bill.	Brought in by	Progress.
Military Lands	*Lord Ludlow*	Committee 23rd July (5) Report 23rd July (5) Read 3^a and passed 31st July (1065)
Militia Ballot	*Earl of Wemyss*	Second Reading defeated 31st July (1031)
*Motor-Cars	*Lord Balfour of Burleigh*	Report 24th July (212) Read 3^a and passed 28th July (525)
*Naval Works	*Earl of Selborne*	Read 1^a 4th August (1430)
Patent Office Extension		Read 1^a 5th August (1571)
Pistols	*Earl of Donoughmore*	Read 3^a and passed 31st July (1065)
Poor Law (Dissolution of School Districts and Adjustments)		Read 1^a 4th August (1430) Read 2^a 5th August (1570)
Post Office Sites		Read 1^a 27th July (301)
Public Offices (Dublin)	*Earl of Denbigh*	Committee 30th July (846) Report 30th July (846) Read 3^a and passed 31st July (1065)

(B.) HOUSE OF COMMONS.

Title of Bill.	Brought in by	Progress.
*Bankers (Ireland) Act Repeal	*Mr. Atkinson*	Bill withdrawn 29th July (819)
Belfast Petty Sessions Court	*Mr. Joseph Devlin*	Read 1^o 30th July (919)
*Bills of Exchange Act (1882) Amendment [H.L.]	*Sir Robert Finlay*	Read 1^o 5th August (1593)
*Bishopric of Bristol [H.L.]	*Mr. Akers Douglas*	Bill withdrawn 29th July (820)
*Bishoprics of Southwark and Birmingham [H.L.]	*Mr. Akers Douglas*	Bill withdrawn 5th August (1718)
*Board of Agriculture and Fisheries [H.L.]	*Mr. Ailwyn Fellowes*	Read 2^o 3rd August (1398)
*Charitable Loan Societies (Ireland)	*Mr. Atkinson*	Read 1^o 30th July (919) Bill withdrawn 5th August (1718)
*Congested Districts (Scotland) (No. 2)	*Mr. Graham Murray*	Bill withdrawn 5th August (1718)

Title of Bill.	Brought in by	Progress.
County and Borough Councils and Metropolitan Borough Councils (Qualification of Women)	*Mr. Channing*	Read 1° 4th August (1454)
*Ecclesiastical Commissioners	*Mr. Akers Douglas*	Bill withdrawn 5th August (1718)
*Electric Lighting (London)	*Mr. Bonar Law*	Bill withdrawn 29th July (820)
*Employment of Children	*Mr. Akers Douglas*	Consideration 31st July (1142) Read 3° and passed 31st July (1142)
Franchise Removal of Women's Disabilities	*Sir Charles Dilke*	Bill withdrawn 5th August (1592)
*Housing of the Working Classes (No. 2)	*Mr. Walter Long*	Read 1° 23 July (89)
*Ireland Development Grant	*Mr. Wyndham*	Committee 31st July (1084) Report 3rd August (1399) Read 3° and passed 5th August (1718)
*Isle of Man (Customs)	*Mr. Arthur Elliot*	Read 1° 4th August (1454) Read 2° 5th August (1718)
Jury Acts (Ireland) Amendment	*Mr. O'Mara*	Bill withdrawn 27th July (436)
*Justices of the Peace [H.L.]	*Mr. Akers Douglas*	Bill withdrawn 29th July (820)
*Light Railways [H.L.]	*Mr. Gerald Balfour*	Read 1° 3rd August (1294)
Liquor Sellers' Liability	*Sir Wilfrid Lawson*	Read 1° 3rd August (1294)
*Marriages Legislation	*Mr. Cochrane*	Read 2° 3rd August (1399)
Merchant Shipping Act (1894) Amendment	*Mr. Runciman*	Read 1° 23rd July (89)
*Military Works	*Mr. Brodrick*	Read 2° 24th July (235) Committee 31st July (1100)
*Motor-Car	*Mr. Walter Long*	Read 1° 29th July (689) Read 2° 4th August (1454)
*Naval Works	*Mr. Pretyman*	Committee 27th July (392) (407) Committee 31st July (1137) Report 31st July (1137) Read 3° and passed 3rd August (1399)

Title of Bill.	Brought in by	Progress.
*Naval Works (Portsmouth Barracks Site)	*Mr. Pretyman*	Bill withdrawn 3rd August (1399)
*Patent Office Extension	*Mr. Arthur Elliot*	Committee 4th August (1517) (1567) Report 4th August (1517) (1567) Read 3° and passed 4th August (1517) (1567)
*Patriotic Fund	*Mr. Pretyman*	Read 2° 28th July (668) Committee 31st July (1145) (1653) Committee 5th August (1712)
Pilotage	*Sir Seymour King*	Read 1° 30th July (919)
*Police Superannuation	*Mr. Cochrane*	Bill withdrawn 29th July (820)
*Poor Law (Dissolution of School Districts and Adjustments)	*Mr. Grant Lawson*	Read 2° 27th July (436) Committee 29th July (820) Report 29th July (820) Read 3° and passed 3rd August (1399)
Poor Prisoners Defence	*Mr. Bousfield*	Committee 24th July (295) Report 24th July (295)
*Public Buildings (Expenses)	*Mr. Arthur Elliot*	Read 1° 30th July (1028)
*Public Works Loans	*Mr. Arthur Elliot*	Read 1° 29th July (689) Read 2° 30th July (1024) Committee 5th August (1718) Report 5th August (1718)
*Railways (Electrical Power)	*Mr. Gerald Balfour*	Committee 5th August (1709)
*Revenue	*Mr. Arthur Elliot*	Read 1° 27th July (339) Second Reading 30th July (1018)
*Sale of Butter	*Mr. Hanbury*	Bill withdrawn 3rd August (1398)
*South African Loan and War Contribution	*Mr. J. Chamberlain*	Read 2° 27th July (339) Committee 30th July (1141) Report 30th July (1141)
*Sugar Convention	*Mr. Gerald Balfour*	Second Reading 28th July (587) (637) Second Reading 29th July (690) (759) Committee 4th August (1527) Committee 5th August (1593)
Trade Unions, Trade Disputes	*Sir Charles Dilke*	Bill withdrawn 5th August (1592)
Wages Board	*Sir Charles Dilke*	Bill withdrawn 5th August (1592)
Wild Birds Protection Acts Amendment	*Mr. Sydney Buxton*	Read 1° 28th July (552)

APPENDIX II.

HOUSE OF COMMONS, SESSION 1903.

LIST OF RULES, ORDERS, &c., which have been presented during the Session, and are required by Statute to lie for an appointed number of Days upon the Table of the House.

[*In continuation of List given in previous volume.*]

Title of Paper.	Date from which the Period runs.	Period to lie upon the Table.
Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew,—Copy of Rules for the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, in connection with the Regulations prescribed by the Parks Regulation Act, 1872 [35 and 36 Vic., c. 15, s. 9]	27 July	One month

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TO THE

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

[AUTHORISED EDITION].

NINTH VOLUME OF SESSION 1903.

JULY 23—*AUG.* 5.

EXPLANATION OF ARRANGEMENT AND ABBREVIATIONS.

Bills: Read First, Second, or Third Time = 1R., 2R., 3R. [*c.*] = Commons. [*l.*] = Lords. *Amendt.* = Amendment. *Os.* = Observations. *Qs.* = Questions. *As.* = Answers. *Com.* = Committee. *Con.* = Consideration. Where in the Index * is added with Reading of a Bill, or a Vote in Committee of Supply, it indicates that no Debate took place on that Stage of the Bill, or on that Vote. Subjects discussed in Committee of Supply are entered under their headings, and also under Members' Names, without reference to the actual Vote before the Committee.

Abercorn, Duke of
Irish Land Bill, *Aug. 3*, 1168.

Aberdeen, Earl of
Licensing Acts (Scotland) Consolidation and Amendment Bill, *July 30*, 845.
(*Committee*), *Aug. 4*, 1407, 1408.

Aberdeen Corporation Tramways Order Confirmation Bill
c. 1R.* *July 23*, 51.
con.* *July 27*, 302.
3R.* *July 29*, 669.

Abyssinia
Affairs in.
Os. Mr. Lloyd-George, *July 23*, 192: Lord Cranborne, *July 23*, 203.

Accidents
Worsted Trade—Frequency of Accidents from Flying Shuttles, Inefficiency of Precautionary Measures.
Q. Sir C. Dilke; *A.* Mr. Akers Douglas, *July 31*, 1079.

Accrington
Christ Church School—Appointment Refused to Isabella Croft on grounds of being a Unitarian.
Q. Sir J. Leese; *A.* Sir W. Anson, *July 28*, 541.

Achonry
Schools At Dismissal of Teacher from National School—Failure to Appoint new one—Non-recognition of New School.
Q. Mr. O'Dowd; *A.* Mr. Wyndham, *July 30*, 912.

Acland-Hood, Capt. Sir A. [Somersetshire, Wellington]
Patent Offices Extension Bill (*Committee*), *Aug. 4*, 1517.

Addenbrooke's Hospital Bill
l. 2R.* *Com.* * *Aug. 4*, 1404.
2R.* *Aug. 4*, 1405.

Addington Park
Amount Derived by Ecclesiastical Commissioners, by Sale of.
Q. Mr. Moon; *A.* Mr. L. Knowles, *July 31*, 1079.

Ad Hoc Authority
see London Education Bill.

Adjournment of the House
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Admiralty
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Afghanistan
- Russia and Afghanistan—Communications between Great Britain and Russia relative to the Afghan Frontier.
  - *Q.* Sir C. Dilke; *A.* Lord Cranborne, *July 23*, 75.

Africa
- Memorandum showing position of the four African Protectorates administered by Foreign Office, Presented, *July 23*, 4.

Africa, Central
- British Protectorate.
  - Area and Population of.
    - *Q.* Mr. H. J. Wilson; *A.* Mr. J. Chamberlain, *Aug. 5*, 1583.
  - Sickness among Natives of, imported to Johannesburg, alleged—Discontinuing Employment of Labour in Mines from same source.
    - *Q.* Sir B. Gurdon; *A.* Lord Cranborne, *July 23*, 64.

Africa, East
- British Protectorate.
  - Area and Population of.
    - *Q.* Mr. H. J. Wilson; *A.* Mr. J. Chamberlain, *Aug. 5*, 1583.
  - Legalisation of Marriage with a Deceased Wife's Sister or Niece in—Grounds for Action.
    - *Qs.* Duke of Northumberland and Mr. Talbot; *As.* Earl of Onslow and Lord Cranborne, *July 31*, 1037, 1073.
- British Steamers for—Decision with regard to Establishment of Direct British Line to East Africa.
  - *Q.* Mr. E. Cecil; *A.* Mr. Austen Chamberlain, *July 23*, 77.

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- Asiastics and Indian Coolies, Exportation of.
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  - *Os.* Master of Elibank, *July 30*, 967; Mr. Chamberlain, *July 30*, 968.
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- Criminal Law, Strictness of.
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- Dutch Farmers, Treatment of.
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  - Duty on, Power of Transvaal Government to Levy Excise Duty on Dynamite imported to Transvaal and Manufactured by the De Beers Company.
    - *Q.* Mr. Markham; *A.* Mr. J. Chamberlain, *July 28*, 538.
  - Monopoly.
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- Education, Condition of.
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- Indian Coolies, *see* Asiatics (subheading).
- Labour.
  - Indentured Indian Coolies.
    - Employment of—Correspondence relating to proposal, Presented, *July 28*, 438, 540.
    - Report of Government of India on subject of—Conditions of agreement, etc.
      - *Q.* Sir M. Bhownaggree; *A.* Lord G. Hamilton, *July 27*, 314.
  - Native Labour in South Africa, Alleged deficiency of—Appointment of Commission of Inquiry, Members of Commission, Terms of reference,
    - *Q.* Mr. S. Buxton, *A.* Mr. J. Chamberlain, *July 23*, 70.
  - Recruiting Mine-labourers from Central and East Africa, etc.
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